

From Genesis to After Hours



Meeting the needs of newly
diagnosed gay men

Marketing

- In the past advertisements in SSO
- Budget constraints led us to review promotional strategy
- Now use referral pathways such as GPs, Psychologists and Counsellors (achieved through enhanced care and visits to practice/clinic meetings)

Program outline



- Closed group, psycho-emotional support, confidential, structured
- Sessions include: personal stories, basic principles of the immune system, treatments, disclosure, STIs, finding a doctor, and planning for the future

Participants



- Since 2000, we have run a total of 15 programs (average of 12 participants)
- Mean age of participants over the last year was 35, with ages ranging from 24-62 years
- Length of diagnosis range from 1 week to 33 months

Review

- In 2003, the entire program was reviewed via consultation with primary health care providers
- Consultants included Manager Clinical Services (ACON), Treatments Officer, PLWHA Community Development Officer, Health Promotion (ACON), GP from Taylor Square Private Clinic

Review

- Recommendations included
- Sexual health component such as libido, erectile dysfunction, STIs
- Emphasis on building skills around dialogue with doctors
- Treatment session changed to reflect questions asked by participants (removal of didactic element)

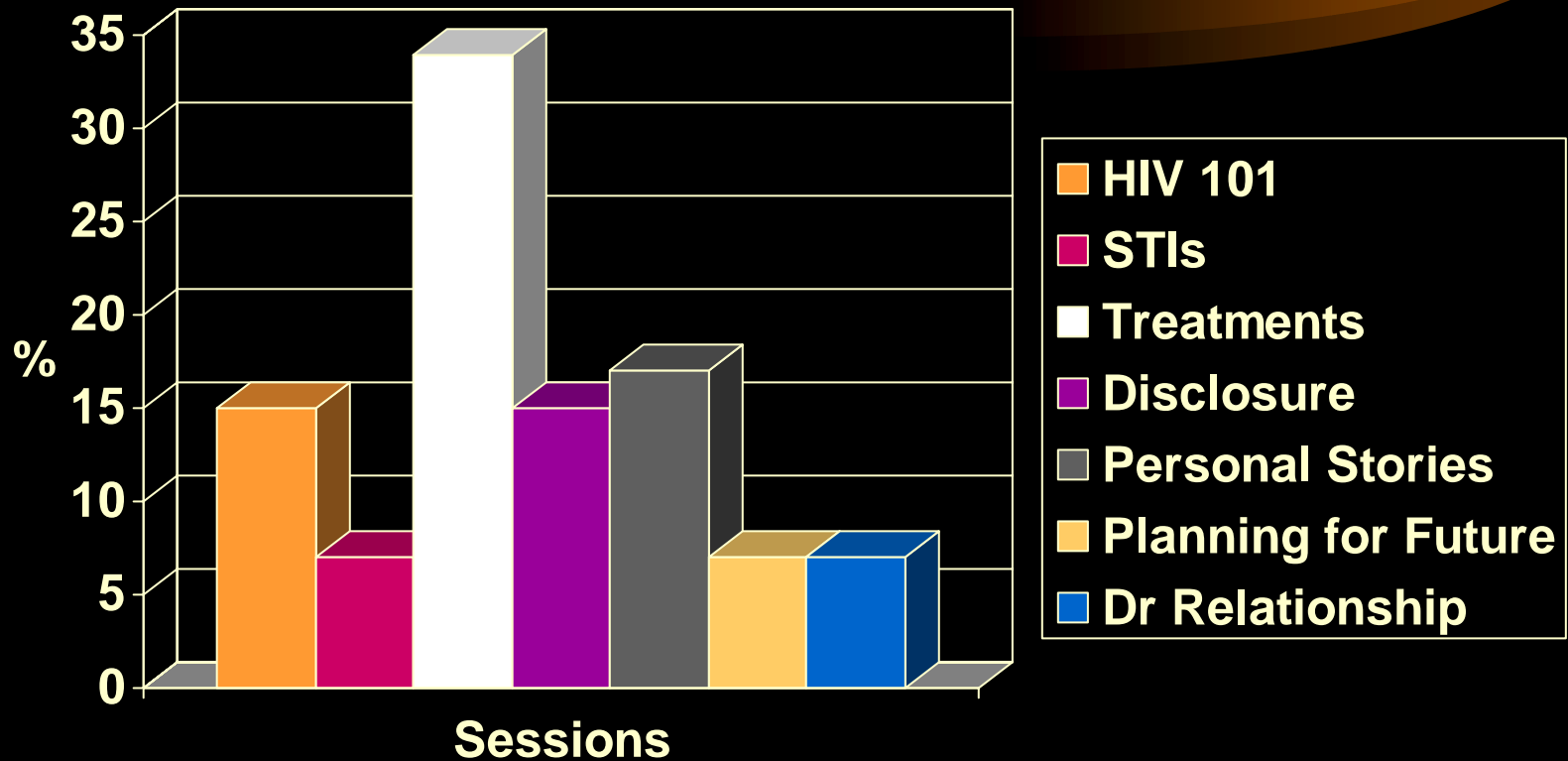
Review



- Find new ways of keeping *Genesis* on GPs' agenda such as HIV study groups, mail outs and reminders
- Disclosure identified as important issue that needs large portion of time devoted to it

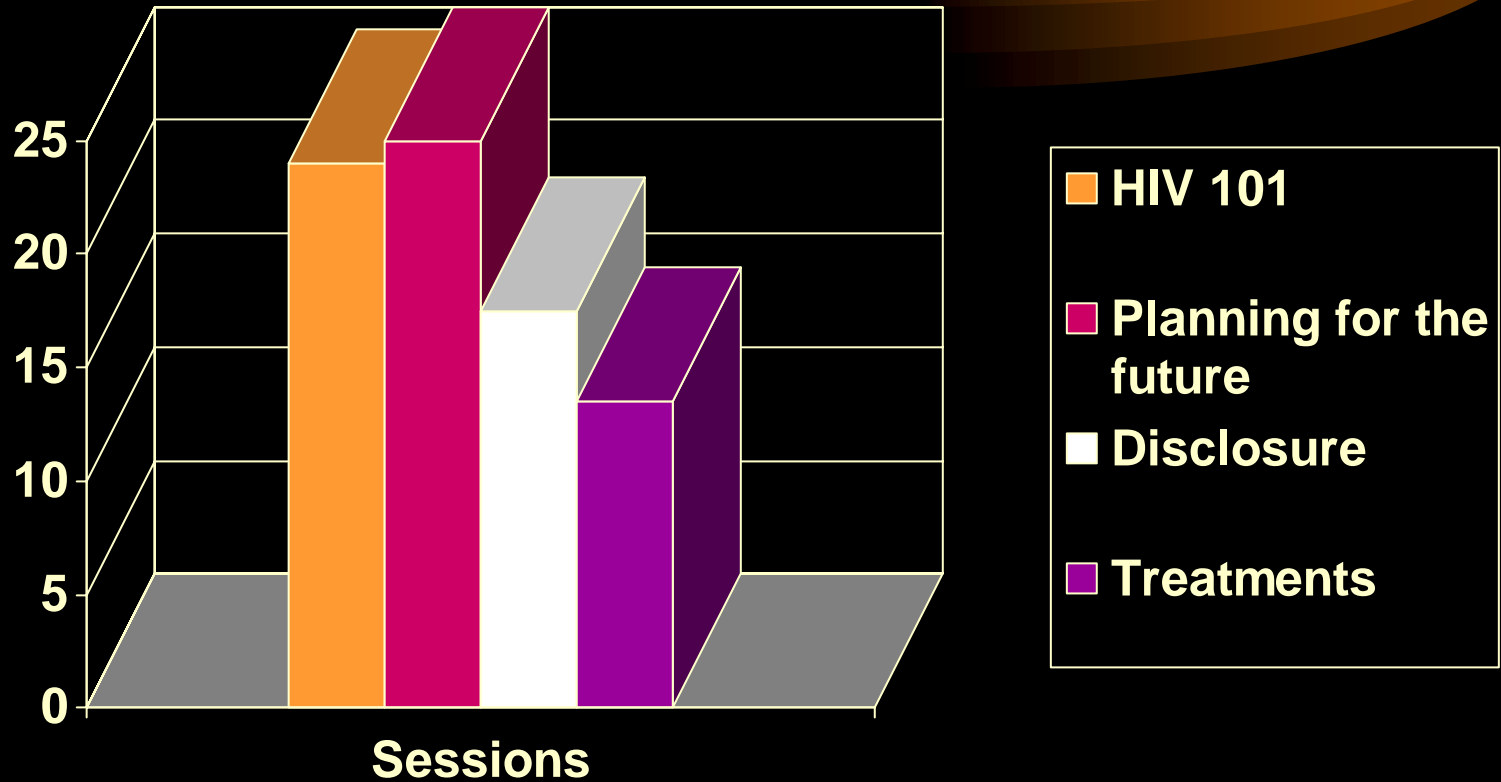
Evaluations

(most helpful/enlightening session)



Evaluation

(least enlightening/helpful session)



Some qualitative feedback

- Allowed open and frank discussion
- Flexible enough to cover group and individual needs
- Good to discover commonalities with other people and realise I'm not alone
- Helped me understand more about HIV
- I needed to meet other HIV positive guys

Conclusion

- Whilst people may have access to a GP, counsellor, peer worker, or support worker, feedback suggests that there is great value in being able to connect with people in the same situation. This makes *Genesis* a unique contribution to newly diagnosed men's health and emotional well being

After Hours

- Traditionally after *Genesis* participants are invited to attend a follow-up dinner
- After significant feedback from clients a gap was identified in services for newly diagnosed men
- Partnership developed between ACON and PLWHA NSW

After Hours

- Created informal space to make it less clinical, less like “support” group, more like social event (HP in social context)
- Group started in December 2003
- Majority of referrals from *Genesis* but we have advertised in gay press

After Hours

- 36 participants are currently registered on After Hours email list
- smallest group has had 6 people, largest 18
- 5 participants recruited from advertising, 2 by word of mouth, and the rest from *Genesis*

After Hours



- Open drop-in group
- Core group
- Increased involvement in the community
- Increased confidence in group since *Genesis*
- Networking opportunities

Discussion topics



- First meeting identified discussion topics
- Disclosure
- Treatments
- Sex
- Emotional well-being

Qualitative Feedback



- A safe environment where you can be honest and open
- I'm better prepared to deal with life and its "curve balls"
- Help me become more positive about life and feel more normal

Qualitative feedback



- It has made me more comfortable with the idea of being poz, and that has been incredibly important
- I enjoy the group's company and exchange of ideas