

with men in Kisumu, Kenya: support group membership and knowledge of HIV-risk factors.

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Abstract

Men who have sex with men are an important yet marginalised population for HIV prevention in Africa. We conducted a two-phase study (individual qualitative interviews and a survey) of men who have sex with men, aged 18-34 years of age and living in Kisumu, Kenya. Approximately half (27/51) of survey respondents reported belonging to a support group. The odds of belonging to support groups were greater for older men (aged 24-34 versus 18-23 years [OR = 5.20; 95% CI = 1.27-26.66]). More than two-thirds (68.6%) of survey respondents were categorised as having high knowledge of HIV-risk factors. Most respondents (94.1%) correctly reported lack of condom use during vaginal sex as a risk factor for HIV, but slightly fewer (82.4%) recognised lack of condom use during anal sex as an HIV risk factor. Among the 15 interviewees, the following were included as greatest needs: health information (n = 5), safe lubricants (n = 5), condoms (n = 4), healthcare facility or men-who-have-sex-with-men-friendly health services (n = 3) and advocacy (n = 2). Kenyan men who have sex with men have developed support groups and have unmet needs for information, lubricants and condoms and services. Partnering with support groups offers an opportunity for organisations to reach men who have sex with men with accurate health information, provision of safe sexual lubricants, condoms and other health and social services.