

Men Who Have Sex with Men and Use of an In Home HIV Test

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Abstract

The authors will examine Men Who Have Sex with Men's (MSM) knowledge, attitudes, and utilization patterns of a new rapid in home HIV test. Data will be collected via a focus group interview session of MSM ages 18-21 recruited from the Houston, Texas metropolitan area with the assistance of a community research collaborator partner, the Montrose Center.

Problem

Young MSM are at increased risk for HIV infections (CDC, 2012a.)

Orasure Technologies recently received FDA approval for an over the counter rapid HIV in home test. The over the counter in home test (OIT) may present challenges for HIV prevention efforts given the limitations of the test and lack of accurate knowledge of the test by potential users.

The OIT has high sensitivity and specificity rates but is not 100% accurate and is not a definitive indicator of HIV serostatus. MSM may not be aware of the limitations of the OIT, provoking concerns that the test may foster a sense of false security due to false HIV-results.

Purpose

This research is designed as a cross sectional (rapid assessment) phenomenological pilot study to gather baseline data about MSM and their understanding of and use of the OIT. Data will be used to inform future educational and HIV prevention efforts among MSM.

Relevant Literature

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2012a). *CDC HIV facts sheet*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2012b). *HIV and young men who have sex with men*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/msm>

Chen MY; Bilardi JE; Lee D; Cummings R; Bush M; Fairley CK, Australian men who have sex with men prefer rapid oral HIV testing over conventional blood HIV testing. *International Journal Of STD & AIDS*, 2010 Jun; Vol. 21 (6), pp. 428-30

Creswell, J.W. (2009) *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approach*. Los Angeles: CA Sage Publications Inc.

Glanz, K., Rimer, B. K., & Viswanath, K. (Eds.) (2008). *Health behavior and health education*. San Francisco CA.: Jossey-Bass

Texas Department of State Health Services. (2012). Update on HIV seroconversion. Retrieved from www.dshs.state.tx.us/Work Area



Research Questions

The primary research question is:
What are the lived experiences of MSM ages 18-21 with regards to the rapid in home HIV test?

Secondary Research Questions include:

What do MSM know about the OIT?
Are MSM aware of the limitations of the OIT?
How have MSM used the OIT?
Do MSM intend to use the OIT and for what purpose?

Procedures

- Develop interview guide and protocol.
- Recruit 12 MSM ages 18-21 with help from a community based partner in Houston,
- Acquire participant informed consent.
- Collect basic demographic data via a brief written questionnaire.
- Interview, participants via a focus group.
- Audiotape and analyze data.
- Provide participants light food and beverages and a \$15.00 Target gift certificate in appreciation for their participation.

Data Analysis

- Utilize the theory of planned behavior as a framework to assist in the interpretation of data
- Organize and analyze data using the Nvivo qualitative software program.
- Code data and identify themes using the phenomenology approach and methods (Creswell, 2009.)
- Verify trustworthiness of data analysis by independent review and analysis by each member of the research team to achieve concordance and increase validity.

Findings

Findings will include knowledge of and attitudes towards the OIT, utilization patterns of the OIT, including intended use of the OIT for HIV prevention by the study subjects.

Limitations

This pilot study employs a convenience purposive sampling method with a small number of participants. Therefore findings may not apply to other MSM in other geographic locations and should be interpreted with caution.

Conclusions

This baseline pilot study will add to knowledge about what young MSM know about the rapid in home HIV test, how they use or intend to use the test, and hopefully inform future HIV prevention efforts among this vulnerable population.

Results and recommendations for further action and research will be disseminated to stakeholders through community presentations and publication in the peer reviewed literature.

Social Change Implications

The potential positive social change impact of this study is the development of effective HIV prevention interventions among young MSM and the protection of their health and well being.