

Condom Man Program at Bars In Bali, Indonesia: It Is Not Just About Handing Out Condoms

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Introduction

Bali as a tourist destination has attractions for foreign or domestic MSM and transgenders. Research conducted by LaTrobe University, Australia, for the Indonesian National AIDS Commission (2012) showed that five bars in the tourist area of Seminyak were the most frequently visited, including by MSM sex workers. Large numbers of Indonesian MSM arrive in Bali with minimal information about HIV. The Gaya Dewata Foundation (YGD) an organization for MSM/Transgenders in Bali, developed the CondomMan initiative to provide intensive information to MSM in these bars and to improve access to condoms and lubricant as well as VCT referrals.



Figure 1: YGD outreach worker in Condom Man uniform

Materials and methods

CondomMan operates in the five bars at night, wearing a special uniform so he will be easily recognized. He speaks Indonesian and English with an open approach, relaxed and fun, appropriate to the bars. CondomMan distributes brochures, flyers and lubricant, focussing on men he has not seen or reached before. He provides information about HIV, including referrals for Voluntary Counselling and Testing and other services.

CondomMan usually distributes over 140 free condoms and 70 lubricant sachets per night. His regular presence maintains accessibility of condoms and lubricant in an environment where decisions on sexual activity are being made. YGD has an arrangement with the bar owners to announce CondomMan's presence nightly.

Results

The involvement of bar managers has been important to "institutionalize" CondomMan's presence and to socialise acceptance for provision of information and advice, particularly amongst peer groups of MSM. Focussing on newly arrived Indonesian MSM, who frequently have had little or no exposure to HIV prevention information previously, has resulted in his reaching over 60 newcomers in bars each month.

YGD monitoring shows that increasing numbers of MSM have been tested each year since 2010:

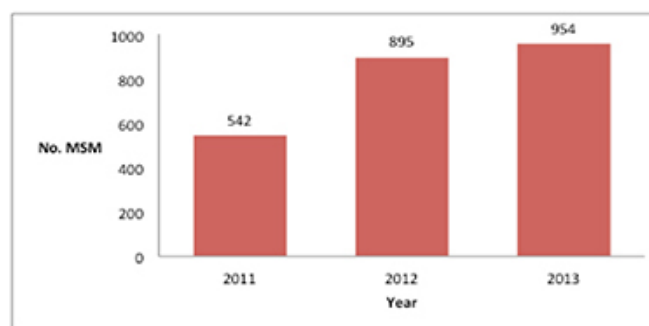


Figure 2: Numbers of YGD clients having HIV tests by year

Annual client surveys also show high levels of condom use with casual partners at last sex, for insertive and receptive anal sex, although consistent condom use still lags behind, as shown in survey results 2012-2014:

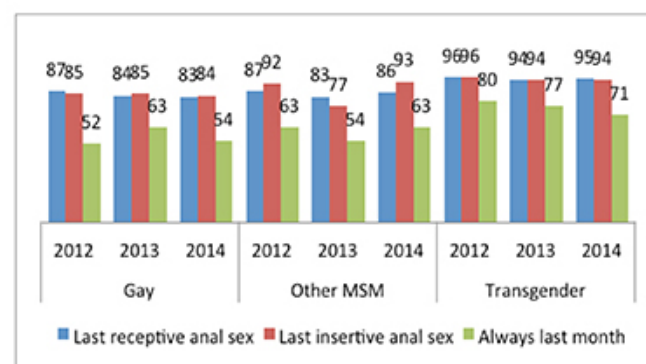


Figure 3: Results of client surveys, condom use at last sex and consistently with regular and casual partners 2012-2014



Figure 4: YGD outreach worker in the street near clubs in Kuta

Conclusions

Bar visitors appreciate CondomMan as he provides information condoms and referrals on the spot. YGD is planning to add a second CondomMan to increase the number of MSM, especially newcomers to Bali, reached in key bars.



The HIV Cooperation Program for Indonesia is an initiative of the Australian Government in partnership with the Government of Indonesia and is managed by GRM International and the Burnet Institute.

