

Abstract 3296-ON-AB-A HIV risk & sexual behaviors of Middle Aged MSM: Findings from the 2007 Osaka bar survey

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Background

In Japan, AIDS surveillance data indicates HIV infections rates are increasing among men who have sex with men (MSM) of Japanese nationality aged 60 and above. This study aimed to investigate the HIV risk and preventive behaviors of middle aged and older MSM in the Osaka region.

Method

In 2007, gay NGO outreach staff distributed self administered questionnaires to 259 gay bars, shops and saunas in Doyama, Minami and Shin-Sekai in Osaka. Of 1,046 valid responses received (response rate 60.6%), data from 965 MSM living in the Osaka (Kinki) region were used for analysis.

Findings

Age: Breakdown of respondents age is shown in **Graph 1**.

Sexual activity: The number of anal sex partners in the previous 6 months was lower among MSM in their 40s and 50s although the proportion of sex partner numbers is consistent across age groups **Graph 2**.

Condom use during anal sex in the previous 6 months:

Increasing rates of condom use are observed from 20s to 40s age groups, subsequently plummeting in the 50 plus age group **Graph 3**. Similarly, condom purchasing in the previous 6 months is low in older age groups **Graph 4**.

HIV Testing: HIV testing experience among MSM aged 50 and over is low in comparison with younger age groups **Graph 5**.

Access to gay NGO activities: Awareness of gay community center activities and participation in gay festival is low among MSM over 50, although readership of gay community newspaper published by the gay NGO & distributed to gay bars is fairly consistent across all age groups **Graph 6**.

HIV related norms: MSM aged over 50 were less likely to believe that 'compared to the past, condom using gay friends have increased' **Graph 7** and that 'compared to the past, prejudice toward people with HIV has decreased' **Graph 8**. In comparison with younger age groups, MSM over 50 were also less likely to be able to tell their partners to use condoms, if their partner wanted to have sex without a condom **Graph 9**.

Conclusion

While MSM aged 50 plus are sexually active, condom use and life-time and previous year's HIV testing experience is low indicating elevated HIV risk. Compared to younger age groups, awareness of gay NGO community center activities and festival participation is low, although levels of awareness of NGO produced gay community newspapers is fairly similar across age groups. Attitudinal levels to HIV among MSM aged over 50 indicate that this group have different values in relation to HIV. There is a need for targeted programs to raise HIV perception and increase condom use for MSM aged over 50. A community paper type of format distributed to gay bars and shops may be useful in reaching older MSM.

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