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Track C - Epidemiology of sexual behaviour

CDC0248 - Research into knowledge, attitudes and sexual practices amongst men who have sex with men

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Background: In the last two decades AIDS has been a critical health concern in the world of men who have sex with men (MSM). This study aimed to analyse the knowledge, attitudes and risk and prevention behaviours related to HIV infection amongst MSM in Recife.

Methods: It was a cross sectional survey, using the respondent driven sampling chain referral method, as it appears to be an alternative in constructing probabilistic samples for hidden populations, based on the principles of heterogeneity or diversity. The data was collected via a structured questionnaire, 277 people participated.

Results: The results revealed that a reasonable diversity concerning socio-demographic profile was obtained; more than 53% are less than 30 years old, 48% are catholic, 42.2% are white whilst 20% are black, 51% are employed. The majority are unmarried, not living alone and have a high level of schooling. 64% identified themselves as homosexual, and 3.2% as men who have sex with men but do not identify themselves as homosexual, around 74% are attracted only to men whilst 25% are attracted to both men and women. The percentage of men who have sex with men who have had unprotected sexual relations increases if different sexual practices are included. Age and work situation seemed to have the strongest relationship with the level of engagement in unprotected sex. The Men who reported difficulties in discussing sex with their partners and those who had problems negotiating the practice of safe sex were significantly more likely to have had unprotected sex.

Conclusions: A high level of the men questioned still practiced unprotected sex even if they report satisfactory levels of information and communication with partners. This research does not consider internal variations within the population of men who have sex with men but it provides strong indications of behaviours which put this group at risk of HIV infection. Presenting author email: nara_vieira@hotmail.com