

Programme Title: Mercury III – Intensive Support and Preventive Programme for AIDS and Blood Borne Disease

Executive Summary:

Project 1: Project Together We Care for Hearts Behind Bars

Aim

1. To scale up the coverage and intensity of HIV preventive education in Correctional Institutes of Correctional Service Department (CSD)
2. To facilitate the greater participation of prisoners in HIV prevention;
3. To foster a supportive environment for PLHIV in institutional setting.

Objectives

1. To deliver the knowledge of HIV/AIDS and blood-borne disease to inmates;
2. To enhance inmates' participation in HIV/AIDS work.
3. To enhance the capacity building of CSD staff on the knowledge of HIV/AIDS.

Project design

Referred to the recommendation from WHO, prison is the suitable setting in providing HIV/AIDS prevention and education to prisoners who are found with high-risk behaviors such as IDU, sex worker and their client.

Knowledge based education as foundation to all inmates in the induction course of the prison and pre-released program so as to eliminate the stigmatization effect in receiving HIV education;

On top of the knowledge delivery, "Health Ambassador Program" invited inmates to attend intensive group session with KABP model (knowledge, Attitude, Belief, and Practice) to strengthen their capacity in HIV prevention as well as enhance their participation in HIV prevention.

Besides, fostering a supportive environment for PLHIV and high-risk population in prison is essential to HIV prevention; therefore, capacity building to correctional department staffs is also one of the core elements of the project.

Target population

Inmates of Hong Kong Correctional Services in all ages, genders and ethnicities including injecting drug users, sex workers and their clients and MSM.

Main achievements

1. The education program has been recognized as regular program in prison by Correctional Services Department.
2. IDU, sex worker and their client were reached by the education program.
3. Young female inmates who joined "Health Ambassador" Intensive Education Programme were found with experience in unprotected sex and/or compensated dating. Their awareness in prevention of unprotected sex and willingness to condom use are increased after the programme.
4. Over 500 inmates used their artwork to show the support for PLHIV after received education, a series of posters with their artwork produced and distributed in International AIDS Conference 2014.
5. To respond the theme "Getting to Zero" and to reduce stigma when conducting AIDS education, we organized the Multi-media broadcasting program in female prison on World AIDS Day, it was beneficial to around 1,800 inmates from different nations.
6. To foster a supportive environment of PLHIV, 2,112 staffs of CSD received our education from training school in 2011-2014. They acquired accurate knowledge on HIV/AIDS as well as raised their acceptance towards people influenced by HIV/AIDS.

Conclusions

With the support of CSD, HIV/AIDS education has been rendered in prison with the wide coverage. The program not only delivered the knowledge of prevention, but also provides the platform to change their attitude towards chance of infection.

Referred to Recommendation for HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong 2012-2016, Life-skills based intensive education was added, as intervention strategy to enhance the capacity to the youth-at-risk in HIV/AIDS prevention. HIV/AIDS prevention and education are needed to continue in prison so as to gear up the high risk populations to stay away from the virus.

Project 2: Care Mobile Net – Outreach Education and Voluntary Counselling Test

Aim

1. To educate and enhance the knowledge in preventions of HIV and blood-borne diseases infection to sex industry workers, female sex workers and their clients;
2. To enhance the motivation of the above clients to access the Voluntary Counselling and Testing Service;
3. To increase the adoption of safer sex practices among the above clients so as to maintain low HIV prevalence in Hong Kong through professional interventions by registered social workers.

Objectives

1. To extend the accessibility to condom for sex industry workers, female sex workers and their clients;
2. To scale up the coverage of HIV antibody test and examinations of Sex Transmitted Diseases;
3. To promote the target community to sustain adopting safer sex practice;
4. To promote the target community's involvement in AIDS prevention programs;
5. To conduct scientific study on the risk behaviours of sex worker clients.

Project design

Since sex worker, sex worker client and sex industry worker are the core stakeholders to determine the safer sex practice in commercial sex setting, this project provides comprehensive intervention for them, with tailor-made intervention strategy by community's active participation.

Innovative Information, Education and Communication materials such as smart phone application and condom sticker with easy-to-remember knowledge are the examples of knowledge delivery strategy of the project.

Community members were recruited as peer educator to deliver the message of safer sex and to distribute free condom and lubricant to the community under the management of professional staff so as to enhance the community's awareness to their risky behaviors as well as their motivation towards testing service.

Voluntary Counseling and Testing service (VCT) were provided by professional social worker, not only providing result to the clients, but also creating a platform for the client to review their risky behavior and develop safer practice in the future. The

Project also provided intensive VCT session and intervention for target clients with high-risk.

Target population

1. Female Sex Workers
2. Female Sex Worker Clients
3. Sex industry worker

Main achievements

1. 3 former female sex workers, 7 sex worker clients were recruited as part time peer educator through outreaching.
2. Over 400 middle-aged female sex workers from Mainland China were reached in 2011-2014. Over 90% of them showed their willingness to adopt safer sex practice after our intervention.
3. 15,000 person times of sex worker clients were reached via Internet outreach, cross-border outreach as well as SRACP internal service unit intervention.
4. 6 sex industry workers (organizers of cross-border commercial sex event tour) were reached and recruited as our safer sex ambassador to deliver condom to their clients for our service.
5. 400 HIV antibody tests were delivered to the communities at service center as well as where the client located so as to enhance their accessibility to our testing service.

Conclusions

To maintain low HIV prevalence among female sex worker and their client, timely and continuous intervention is essential to avoid the sudden outbreak occurs in the said population.

Middle-aged cross border street female sex workers and their senior clients, cross-border sex worker client and sex worker client from Internet were identified as potential high-risk populations by the project.

Project 3: Hotspot Tracking “Outreaching Community Initiative for High-risk Populations”

Aims

1. To reduce the chance of infection by share needle among Chinese IDU.
2. To enhance the risk reduction capacity via knowledge delivery.

Objectives

1. To educate Chinese IDU in HIV/AIDS and blood-borne diseases prevention skills
2. To enhance the accessibility of testing service among IDU.
3. To mobilize the IDU community to participate in community prevention education.

Project design

Although the HIV epidemic of IDU community in Hong Kong was low, the injecting drug use is still common in population of heroin users and their sharing needle behavior still occurred frequently.

This project adopted Harm Reduction Approach, to minimize the chance of infection to the community through outreaching, educational group and voluntary counseling and testing service.

Community participation is the core element of this project through peer educator recruitment and community participation of publicity item production. To enhance the accessibility of the testing service to whom from remote area, mobile testing service was established to recruit the clients who with low-motivation to testing for HIV antibody. The Project delivered education and testing service to different drug treatment centers for the clients who receiving drug rehabilitation.

Target population

The Chinese Heroin User.

Main achievements

1. The project covered all methadone clinics near area in Hong Kong.
2. The Project reached ex-offenders who were heroin users with low

motivation towards HIV prevention at SRACP different service units.

3. 72 ex-heroin users were recruited and trained as part time peer educator and 15 of them were qualified to conduct outreaching service with professional staff.
4. To convert the safer message down-to-earth, the Information, Education and Communication materials were tailor made from the ideas of the community.
5. Over 1,079 active heroin users joined and participated the World AIDS Day campaign in order to promote early testing, reduce risky behavior and show their support to PLHIV.
6. Health Education groups using harm reduction Approach covered 11 drug treatment and rehabilitation centers/hostels to strengthen the motivation of the service user on drug rehabilitation. This is also to increase their willingness to adopt safer sex practice and increase their knowledge on blood borne disease transmission.

Conclusions

Referred to the recommendation from Dr. Tim Brown, on-going HIV prevention programme for Injecting Drug Users in Hong Kong is still important, even though prevalence is low among IDU, to avoid the rapid epidemic outbreak occur in such closed and small population.

From front line experience, lack of accessibility of new syringe at night, and easy access to used syringe at public toilet, street and parks are the contributive factors to needle sharing, instead of lacking knowledge. To borrow the successful programme example from Macau or other western countries, Improvement of accessibility of new syringe to IDU is able to reduce the chance of sharing needle. Meanwhile, conducting collection of used syringe program at the community can also reduce the supply of used syringes so as to eliminate the way of HIV infection among the population.

Project 4: Project PEER- Prevention Education through Ethnicity Rapport

Aim

1. To gear up the capacity of risk reduction in HIV infection to Nepalese and ethnic minority drug abusers, especially injecting drug users in Hong Kong
2. To enhance the accessibility of HIV testing service to the population.
3. To foster a greater participation to HIV prevention among the population.

Objectives

1. To educate and mobilize substance abusers to learn about preventive measures of HIV transmission, and motivation them to adopt safer sex practice and drug using practices with less harm;
2. To scale up the coverage of the service and to consolidate the rapports with Nepalese community and other ethnic minority communities;
3. To recruit and train up Nepalese rehabilitated ex-drug abusers as peer educators; through individualized education to promote Harm reduction message of drug abuse and preventive education of HIV to drug abusers and their related communities;
4. To scale up the coverage of HIV antibody test to the Nepalese drug abusers community;
5. To support assessing and monitoring the HIV prevalence, high-risk behaviors and needs for prevention among people from ethnic minorities.

Project design

For drug abuser and injecting drug abusers, Harm Reduction Approach adopted as project core structure, to provide cultural specific community-based outreach, mutual support group and mass program to reach the targeted population at their gather spots and delivered the preventive education.

Hired and trained the rehabilitated drug abusers as Part Time Peer Educators to provide service.

Community participation is the core element of this project, peer educator recruitment and community participate production of publicity items are included.

To enhance the accessibility of the testing service to whom from remote area, mobile testing service in English, Hindi, Urdu and Nepali designed by this

project to recruit the clients who with low-motivation to testing for HIV antibody.

For female, youth and community members, the project provided the cultural sensitive service with different languages and delivered cultural specific Information, Education and Communication materials in EM school and other community gathering area.

Target population

1. Nepalese drug abusers and injecting drug users
2. Nepalese and other non-Chinese community members, female and youth

Main achievements

1. High-risk Nepalese including injecting drug users, sex worker client with unprotected commercial sex were identified
2. 88% of the Nepalese IDU reporting the use of sterile injecting equipment/ not needle sharing the last time they injected after intervention.
3. Over 200 HIV antibody tests conducted to different ethnicity populations in Hong Kong
4. 10 community members were recruited as Part time Peer Educators
5. 300 Nepalese drug abusers profiles were collected.

Conclusions

The situation of Injecting Drug Users of Nepalese community is still our concern since they occupy the largest population of heroin user among the non-Chinese ethnic drug users. The age of Nepalese heroin users was decreasing. More and more Nepalese young people start to use heroin indicates the risks of needles sharing in this generation will remain serious if appropriate and enough service were not given. The Project was able to consolidate the rapport with Nepalese community as well as equip them with knowledge, harm reduction measures. The Project explored some more targeted communities. Meanwhile, cross-ethnicity risky behaviors, also cross-risky behaviors among the community were commonly found.