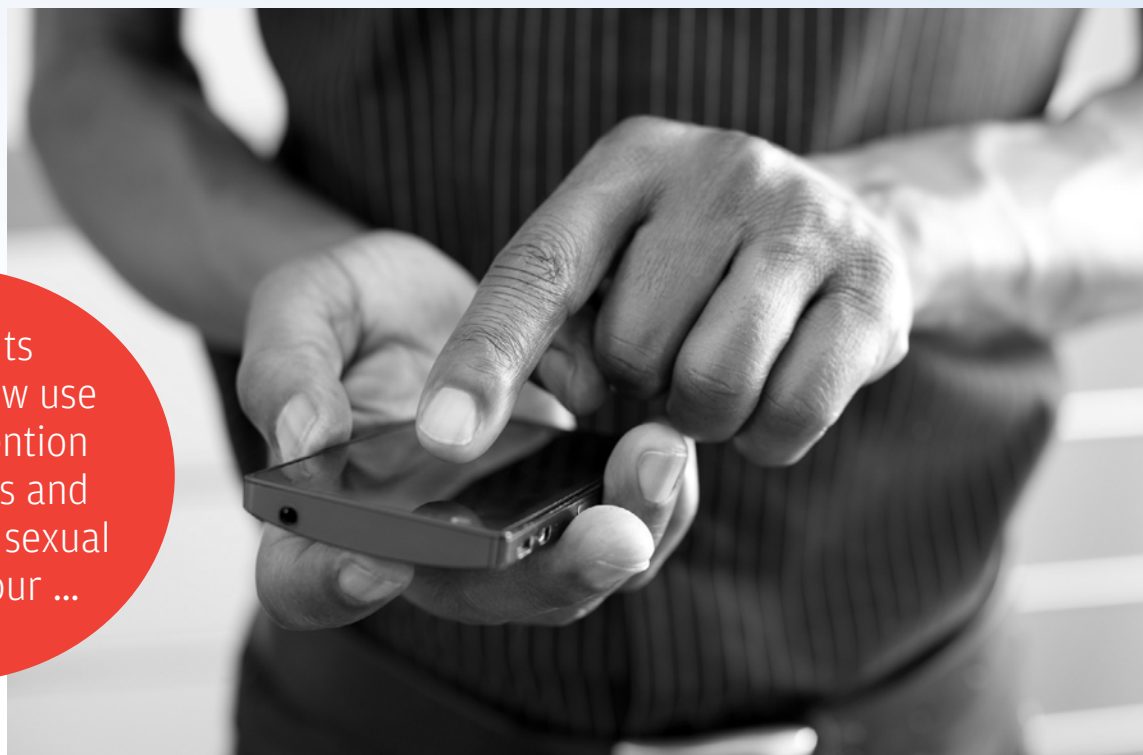


Conversations with men

Providing services for couples can help to address HIV among men in same-sex relationships



The results revealed a low use of HIV prevention interventions and high levels of sexual risk behaviour ...

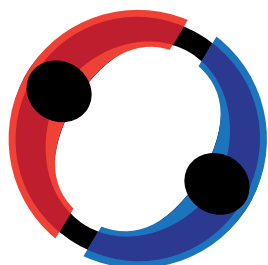
A new study is revealing the many factors which could contribute to higher risk of HIV for men in same-sex relationships. The data, collected through mobile technologies from 220 couples in Namibia and South Africa, provides a backdrop to in-depth interviews

In sub-Saharan Africa, it has been found that men who have sex with men (MSM) are greatly at risk for HIV infection. However, there is a lack of information regarding primary MSM partnerships, including their sexual agreements regarding sex with outside partners, and their engagement in HIV prevention.

A group of researchers set out to identify the presence of HIV prevention methods and treatment activities among MSM couples in South Africa and

Namibia - the first study of its kind in southern Africa. Couples completed interviews via mobile phone separately but simultaneously. The survey included topics such as: relationship functioning, homophobia, HIV stigma, sexual behavior, and HIV prevention and treatment outcomes.

The results revealed a low use of HIV prevention interventions and high levels of sexual risk behavior as well as high levels of stigma around both sexuality and HIV.

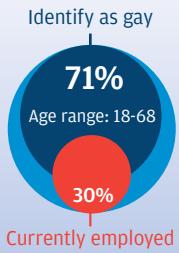


**Together
Tomorrow**
partnerships informing the future

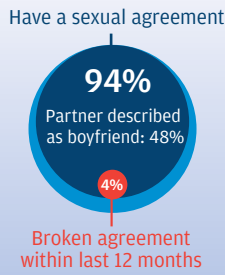
Together Tomorrow is a study exploring the HIV prevention needs of men within same-sex relationships in an attempt to better understand behaviours which could place men at increased risk of HIV. The study was led by the HSRC in collaboration with investigators from the University of California, San Francisco and the University of Michigan, in partnership with the Gay and Lesbian Network (South Africa) and Positive Vibes (Namibia). It was funded by UK aid through the EHPSA programme.

Primary partnerships: HIV prevention and treatment

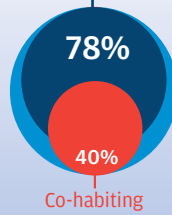
Demographics



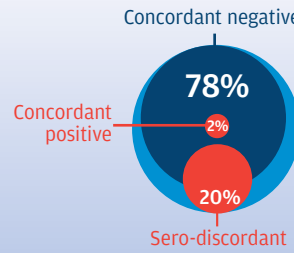
Relationships



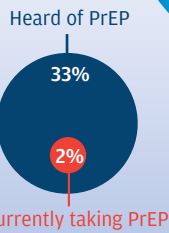
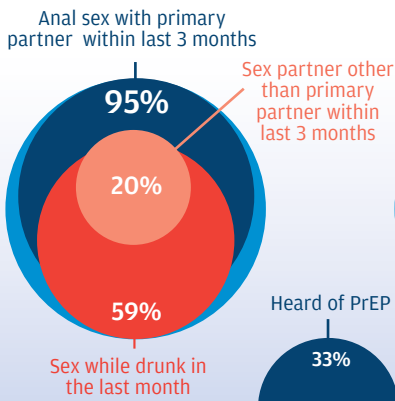
Monogamous



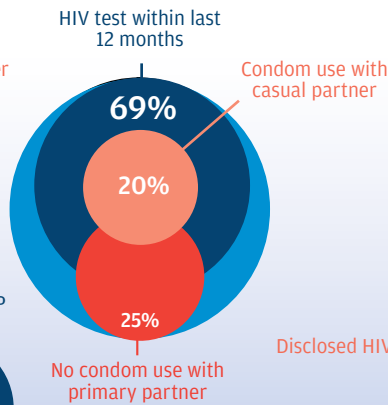
Couple HIV status



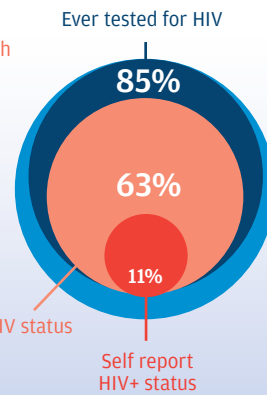
Sexual behaviors



HIV prevention behaviors



HIV testing behaviors



In all graphics light blue represents 100% of the respondents

Sample: 150 couples in South Africa and 70 couples in Namibia Data: Partners interviewed separately but simultaneously

In cases where both partners reported high levels of stigma, frequent substance use, and poor communication skills, there was a significantly lower knowledge of HIV prevention and they were less likely to use condoms with each other or with outside partners.

The study showed further that agreements regarding sex with outside partners are common and relationships are mostly monogamous.

The results indicate the need to implement MSM-focused couples' services that can address issues such as stigma and relationship dynamics

The results were generally worse for the Namibian couples, where same-sex relationships are criminalized, than for the South African couples. The results indicate the need to implement MSM-focused couples' services that can address issues such as stigma and relationship dynamics, and leverage support within partnerships to increase HIV prevention and treatment engagement for a high-risk HIV population.

