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HIV Prevention in the Gay Community

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BCCDC

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Outreach Program



BLAH! BLAH! BLAH!
BLAH! BLAH! BLAH!

The impact of HIV on Gay Men

- Estimates of 1 in 7 gay men in Vancouver are HIV positive.
- HIV has, and continues to, dominate discussion of gay men's health.
- Approximately 40% of new HIV infections in BC are in the MSM/gay community



Current issues

- Shifting communities norms around sex practices
- Sex and social cohesion
- Recreational substance use/ problematic use
- STI rates and HIV vulnerability

Syphilis

Gonorrhea

Herpes Simplex II



Shifting communities norms around sex practices

- Anal sex has “returned to popularity” since the late 90’s
- For some HIV has become less “frightening” as PWA’s health has been maintained due to HAART
- As incidence increases acceptance and “normalcy” increases



Sex and Social Cohesion

- Sex in the gay community can have many functions

Bonding, Recreation, Expression of Cultural Currency, Belonging



Recreational Substance Use/ Problematic Use

- Risk taking and substance use are correlated
- Studies show; substance use is more prevalent in the gay community
- Substance use can be linked to sexual culture, i.e. party and play

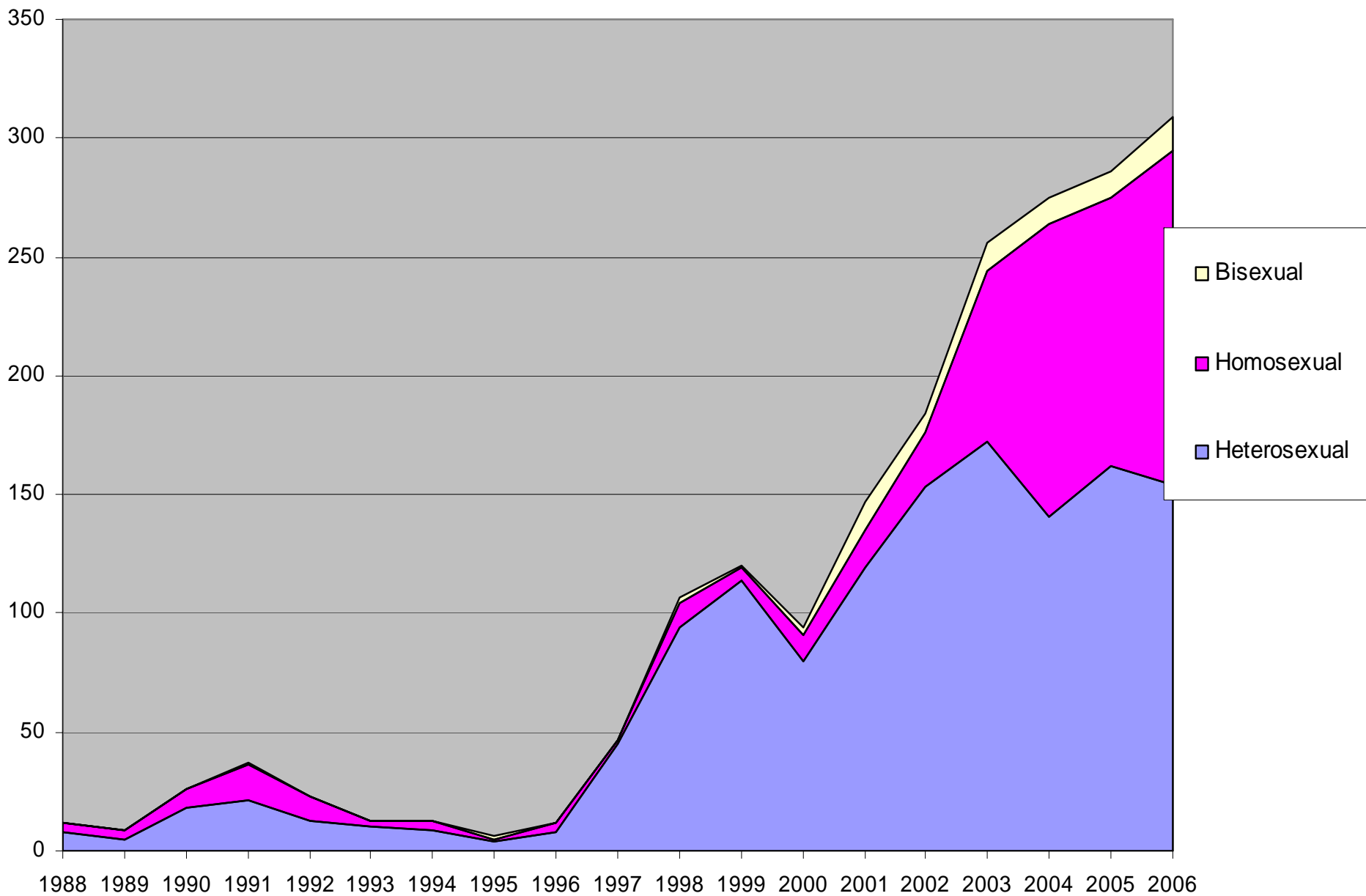


STI rates and HIV vulnerability

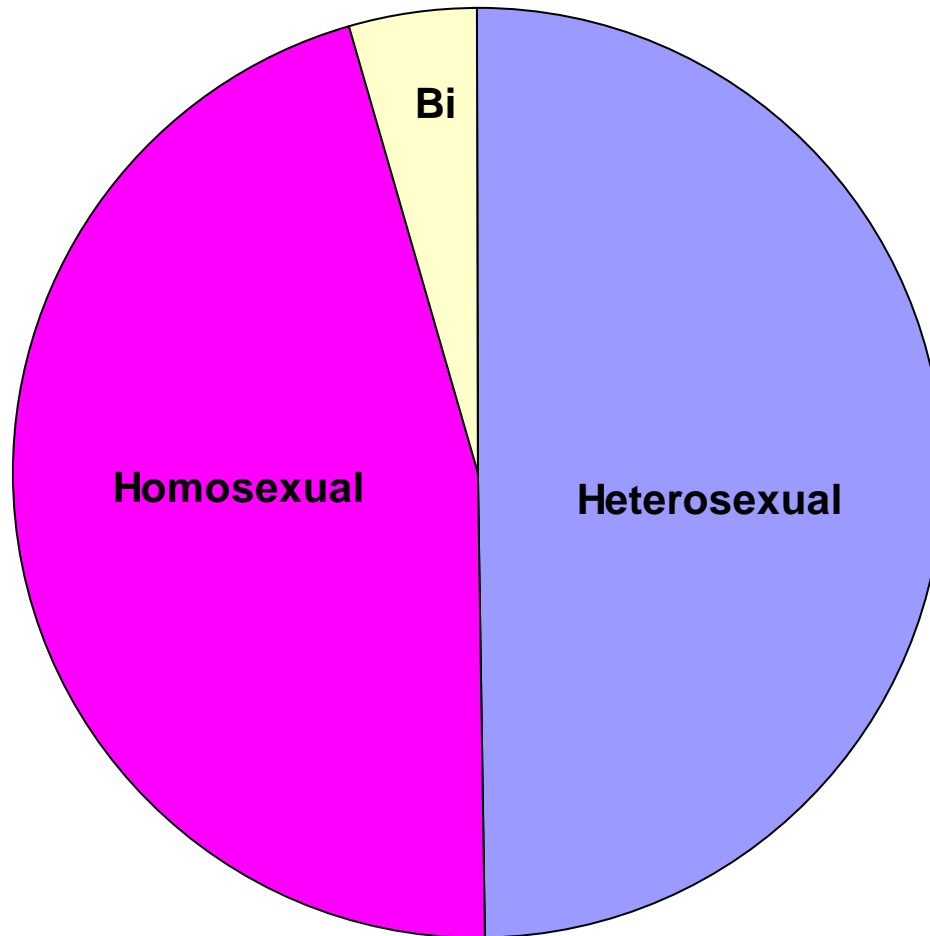
- Syphilis
- Gonorrhoea
- Herpes Simplex II



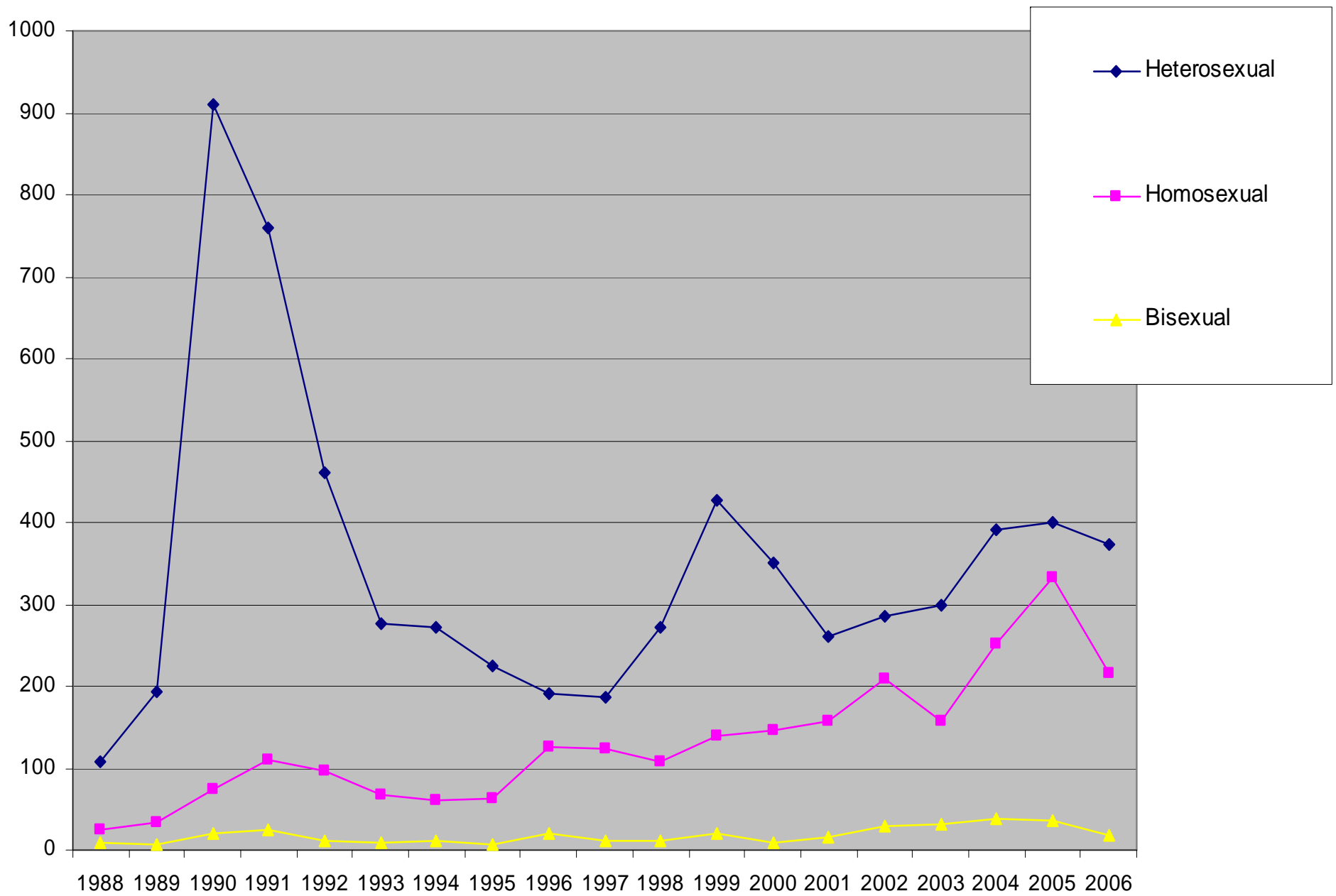
Syphilis in BC by Sexual Preference



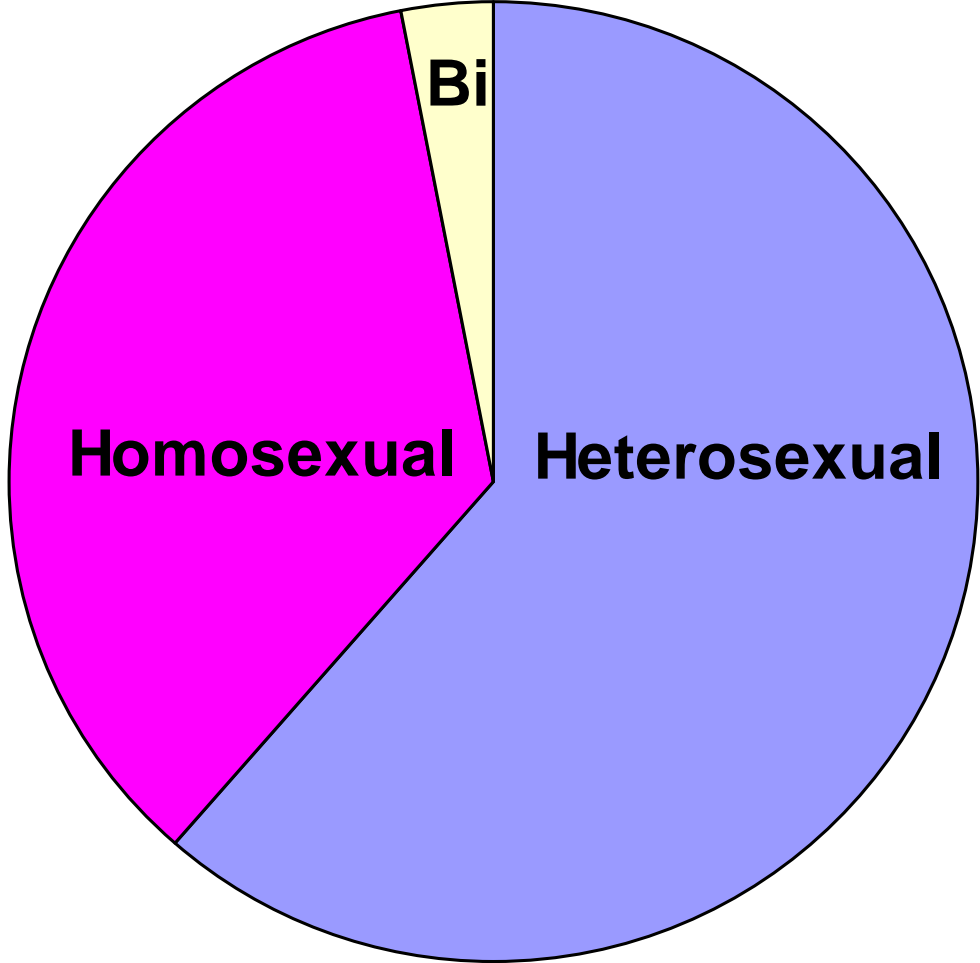
Syphilis in BC 2006 by Sexual Preference



Gonorrhea in BC by Sexual Preference



Gonorrhea In BC 2006 by Sexual Preference



Herpes Simplex II

- Research suggests that having Herpes Simplex type II increase risk of transmission and/or acquisition of HIV by 50%
- This is without regard to presence of an “outbreak” or lesion.
- It is proposed that free HSV anti viral medication be made available to those with HSV II infection.



Current initiatives

- Messaging
- Outreach
- Harm reduction
- GaMMa



Cooties Trading Cards

Don't collect 'em all!



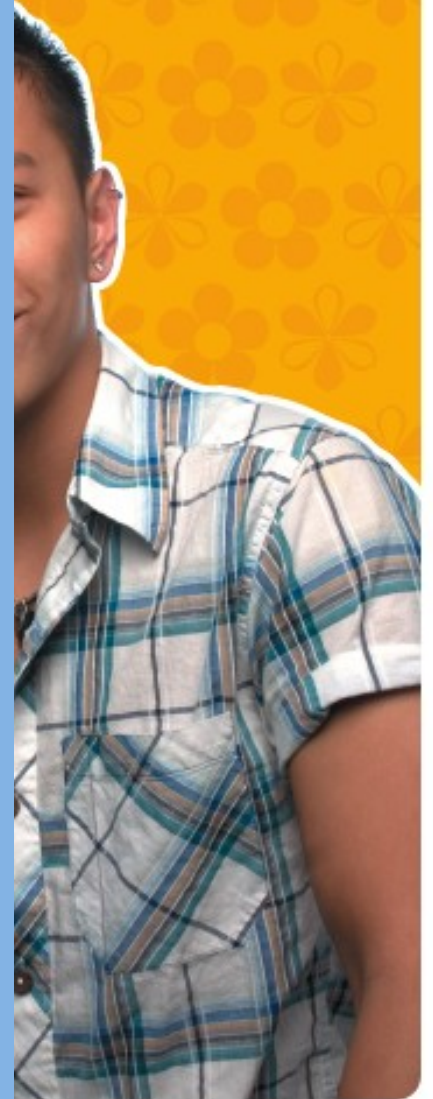
Cory's Crabs

(cute and cuddly)

Illustration: Nils Blinheim AKA Basco

...twice a year.
... (STIs) don't always have symptoms.
... find a clinic.

I get tested.



Outreach

Initiatives to “get the message out”

- Gayway; HIV prevention programs for gay men through AIDS Vancouver

Skills exchange to enhance and foster gay men’s health and well being.

- Bars
- Bathhouses
- Streets



Harm reduction

- Condoms are a harm reduction technique.
- There are other ways to decrease the likelihood of contracting HIV.
 - Strategic positioning
 - Sero-sorting



GaMMa

- Gay Men's Methamphetamine Working Group
- Community Partnership lead by; Centre for Excellence in HIV, Coastal Health Authority, and AIDS Vancouver
- Project is a combined research and outreach education initiative.



Upcoming Initiatives

- Community Organization
- New Messaging Initiatives
- Tertiary/Positive Prevention
- Point of Care/ Rapid HIV Testing
- HIV NAAT Testing
- PEP and PREP
- HAART as Prevention



Community Organization

- Community development and capacity building.
- The gay community is arguably the most organized of the vulnerable populations, yet we do not have an organized “voice”
- To decrease incidence of HIV one must impact social policy, political decisions (funding) and community norms.
- Create a broad based provincial coalition of community members and “GaySO’s”



New messaging initiatives

Tertiary/Positive Prevention

- Working with HIV positive men to maintain the health of the whole community.
- The issues of HIV positive men need to be addressed when developing HIV prevention strategies.
- BCPWA Positive Prevention Initiatives
- Issues; Avoid blame, Maintain a sex positive attitude, community involvement/partnership.



Point of Care/ Rapid HIV Testing

- Results in twenty minutes vs. 1-2 weeks
- POC testing can be an effective tool in HIV prevention.
- Issues; Client follow up, Accuracy, Cost



PEP and PREP

- Post Exposure Prophylaxis. Pre Exposure Prophylaxis for non occupational (sexual) exposure.
- There is good evidence that the HAART can prevent seroconversion.
- The issues; funding and agency, impact on risk behaviour, consumer awareness.



HIV NAAT testing

Nucleic Acid Amplification Tests

- HIV is most infectious in the first 60 days post acquisition of the virus. (estimated to be 28 times more infectious than in later stages)
- Standard HIV antibody testing can detect a new HIV infection at 26 to 35 days after infection.
- NAAT testing can detect infection at 5 to 12 days post infection.
- Therefore by decreasing the “window period” the client can reduce his transmission risk during the most infectious period.
- Issues; cost

HAART as a Prevention Initiative

- The Centre for Excellence in HIV has proposed increasing the availability and/or use of HAART
- If client's viral loads are reduced as early as possible the risk of transmission will be reduced
- Issues; cost, client acceptance.

