



## Editorial Board

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### ~ Calendar ~

54<sup>th</sup> CFA Meeting

2 June 2020

111<sup>th</sup> ACA Meeting

10 July 2020

## A Summary of the 109<sup>th</sup> ACA Meeting held on 10 January 2020

### **HIV risk behavioural survey for ethnic minorities (Filipinos and Indonesians) in Hong Kong 2019**

DH presented the results of a survey for ethnic minorities (EM) commissioned by Special Preventive Programme. EM was one of the key populations of HIV infection in Hong Kong. Although the proportion of new HIV cases among EM had decreased from 30% in 2012 to around 20% in recent years, it was still disproportionately higher than the 8% of EM among the Hong Kong population. About half of the EM cases were of Asian (non-Chinese) ethnicities.

The survey revealed that the condom use rate and HIV testing rate were unsatisfactory, irrespective of the level of sexual risk. A majority of them reported that they had not received any HIV-related health information in the past one year. Ways to disseminate related messages were suggested.

Members noted that religious beliefs could be one of the reasons for their resistance to use condoms. Nevertheless, it was important to listen to and respect the views of religious leaders if one were to seek their support. Members also proposed to approach labour organisations and the NGOs serving the EM communities, as they were more familiar with the special needs and cultural sensitivities of these communities.

In view of the general deficiency of HIV related knowledge, DH would also enhance HIV prevention among EM using both conventional and social media platform.

## Highlights of the 17<sup>th</sup> European AIDS Conference, Basel, Switzerland

DH presented on the 17<sup>th</sup> European AIDS Conference held from 6 to 9 November 2019 at Basel, Switzerland. Chemsex situation in Europe and aging people living with HIV (PLHIV) were highlighted.

In this conference, it was reported that the prevalence of chemsex could vary significantly between countries and between Eastern and Western Europe. The drugs of choice were also highly variable, likely because of availability. Regarding the issue of an aging PLHIV population, DH reported that 35.4% of patients receiving care in the Integrated Treatment Centre (ITC) of DH were above 50 years of age. There was also an increasing prevalence of non-HIV related mortality among ITC clients. These trends were generally consistent with European observations.

Members also noted that PLHIV could develop medical problems up to 10 years earlier than their HIV uninfected counterparts. Although both AIDS and non-AIDS related deaths had dropped after effective treatment, PLHIV remained at increased risks for aging-related and other chronic medical conditions. In this regard, unlike many overseas countries, infectious disease doctors caring for PLHIV in Hong Kong had also undergone training in Internal Medicine. They were therefore quite capable of providing comprehensive care and managing the chronic medical conditions related to aging for PLHIV.





## Report on the 6<sup>th</sup> National Academic Conference on HIV/AIDS, Hangzhou, China

DH presented the latest development in the field of HIV in Asia and the Pacific as well as in Mainland China, as reported in the 6<sup>th</sup> National Academic Conference on HIV held in Hangzhou, China from 15 to 18 October 2019.



In this conference, it was learnt that since the 13<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan announced in 2017, the Chinese Government had further strengthened its public health interventions to curb the epidemic, in a multi-faceted approach with designated tasks shared among different bodies. Civil society was also increasingly involved in community-based HIV prevention programmes with closer collaboration with the Government in an effort to reach the at-risk populations.

Members also noted that large scale studies of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) were implemented in some Asia Pacific countries (such as Australia, New Zealand and Vietnam). A pilot implementation study would be carried out in a few selected cities in Mainland China.



## Report of the Community Forum on AIDS (CFA)

Members noted the summary report and discussions of the 53<sup>rd</sup> CFA Meeting held on 16 December 2019. A summary of this CFA Meeting was contained in the ACA Newsfile (Vol. 27, No. 2 – February 2020).

## A Summary of the 45<sup>th</sup> Scientific Committee on AIDS and STI (SCAS) Meeting

The 45<sup>th</sup> Meeting of SCAS had been held on 15 October 2019. DH briefed members on its major discussions.

## HIV risk behavioural survey for ethnic minorities (Filipinos and Indonesians) in Hong Kong 2019

### Objectives

To study the local situation of HIV infection among ethnic minorities (EM) (Filipinos and Indonesians), Special Preventive Programme (SPP) of the DH commissioned a survey which was conducted from May to September 2019. The objectives of the survey were (a) to explore HIV related knowledge and attitudes of local Filipinos and Indonesians; (b) to understand their practice of condom use and HIV testing; and (c) to identify culturally acceptable and effective ways to reach them for dissemination of HIV prevention messages.

### Methodology

The survey consisted of two parts of data collection: quantitative study (self-administered questionnaire) and qualitative study (focus group discussion). Based on the reported sexual health risks, selected respondents to the quantitative study were invited to participate in the qualitative study for further data collection.

In order to minimise language and cultural barriers with their negative impact on the participation rate, peer Filipino/Indonesian helpers, moderators and translators who were fluent in Tagalog or bahasa Indonesia were recruited as workers for the survey.

The quantitative part of survey was conducted on 26 May and 2 June 2019 in Causeway Bay, Central, Mong Kok and Tuen Mun. A total of 1,600 respondents successfully completed the self-administered questionnaires, including 800 Filipinos and 800 Indonesians. To further identify the knowledge gaps and information needs, two panels of focus group discussion were conducted for Filipinos and Indonesians in September 2019. The discussion explored potential strategies for effective risk communication regarding HIV prevention and publicity targeting EM. Generally speaking, invited participants were those at increased sexual risk.

**Summary of the survey results are available as factsheets on the “Virtual AIDS Office of Hong Kong” website.**

**English:** [https://www.aids.gov.hk/english/surveillance/sur\\_report/em\\_rep2019\\_e.pdf](https://www.aids.gov.hk/english/surveillance/sur_report/em_rep2019_e.pdf)

**Chinese:** [https://www.aids.gov.hk/english/surveillance/sur\\_report/em\\_rep2019\\_c.pdf](https://www.aids.gov.hk/english/surveillance/sur_report/em_rep2019_c.pdf)

