

Editorial Board

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115th ACA Meeting
9 July 2021

A Summary of the 56th CFA Meeting held on 12 March 2021

Experience sharing by The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong (BGCA)

BGCA delivered a presentation on “HIV Prevention for Gay Youths and Chemsex Treatment”. They shared their experience of providing services in tackling chemsex users.

Members concerned about the usual response of parents knowing their child practising chemsex and whether they would provide assistance during the treatment. BGCA advised that it was important to adjust the parents' expectation so as to achieve a realistic target, as chemsex rehabilitation might take years to complete. Members also appreciated the work of BGCA on chemsex and commented that group therapy activity was very important for drug rehabilitation. However, due to space constraints, it was not easy for many NGOs to conduct group rehabilitation activities.



More about the 56th CFA Meeting

Experience sharing by Christian Action

Christian Action delivered a presentation on “Introduction of SHINE Centre and Cultural Sensitivity Talk”. They shared their experience that HIV status or sexual health issues were rarely disclosed or discussed among ethnic minority (EM) clients. While Christian Action mainly served Pakistani, Indian and Nepalese, they observed that needle sharing was common among EM injecting drug users. Hence it was considered that any means to reduce needle sharing was imminent.

Members echoed and the Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, Hong Kong (SRACP) also shared their experience of an ongoing project that provided sharp boxes to public toilet cleaners in Yau Tsim Mong and Sham Shui Po District to collect used needles.

HIV epidemiology in Hong Kong 2020

DH briefed members about HIV epidemiology in Hong Kong 2020. The number of newly reported cases has decreased in 2020, but young MSM still dominated the epidemic. Cumulatively, DH received 10,785 HIV reports and 2,230 AIDS cases as of 2019. The number of HIV reports decreased by about 10.6% in 2020 as compared with 2019.

Members noted the decreasing number of reported HIV cases in recent years, dropped from its peak in 2015. DH supplemented that the decrease in reported cases in 2020 might be attributed to the decrease in number of HIV tests performed by various services in the time of COVID-19 when many testing services were suspended. Regarding homosexual/bisexual (MSM) transmission, the HARiS survey result in 2020 showed the increased use of PrEP for HIV prevention which might also contribute to decrease in new reported cases. The decreasing trend of MSM cases over the recent years was established and need to be monitored. With the re-opening of testing services in the community, the number of reported cases might rebound in first half of 2021.

A review of HIV/AIDS epidemiology in 2020

(prepared by the Surveillance Office, Special Preventive Programme, Department of Health)

There were a total of 505 HIV cases and 112 AIDS cases reported to the Department of Health (DH) in 2020. Cumulatively, DH received 10,785 HIV reports and 2,230 AIDS cases as of 2020. The number of HIV reports decreased by about 10.6% in 2020 as compared with 2019.

Of the 505 HIV cases, 418 males and 87 females, reported in 2020, 272 (53.9%) acquired the infection via homosexual or bisexual contact, 137 (27.1%) via heterosexual contact and two (0.4%) via drug injection. The routes of transmission of the remaining 94 cases (18.6%) have yet to be determined due to inadequate information at the time of reporting.

Majority of the cases (over 75%) were diagnosed HIV-positive at the age range of 20-49 years old. The overall median age of cases in 2020 was 37. MSM cases (median age of 33) were younger than heterosexual female cases (40) and heterosexual male cases (42.5). Seventy percent of the cases were of Chinese ethnicity.

The commonest reporting source in 2020 was public hospitals/clinics/laboratories (51.7%), followed by DH's Social Hygiene Clinics (13.7%) and AIDS Unit (11.3%).

A majority of the 112 AIDS cases reported in 2020 were male (78%) and Chinese (76%); 53% acquired the virus through homosexual or bisexual contact and 41% via heterosexual route. Most AIDS patients had their HIV infections diagnosed at public hospitals and clinics (83.9%).

Pneumocystis pneumonia and other infections were the two commonest AIDS-defining illnesses (ADI) in Hong Kong in 2020. They accounted for 60.7% of all new AIDS reports in 2020.



Online Training Workshop on Basic Knowledge of HIV/AIDS & STIs for NGO Staff

To provide a more comprehensive understanding on HIV and its risk factors, the annual NGO training workshop was organised again by the Red Ribbon Centre (RRC) in 2021 while it was suspension in 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic. The two sessions of the training workshop were held on 15 and 20 April 2021 respectively in webinar format. Staff working in AIDS NGOs, drug rehabilitation NGOs and NGOs providing services to sexual minorities were invited to attend the workshop. 55 and 57 NGO staff attended two sessions respectively.

The first session covered basic knowledge of HIV and viral hepatitis, services provided by DH HIV clinic, HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis and post-exposure prophylaxis. Speakers included Dr. Sheldon FUNG and Dr. Alfred SIT from RRC, Dr. Bonnie WONG and Ms. Teresa LEUNG from Kowloon Bay Integrated Treatment Centre of DH.

The second session covered basic knowledge of STIs, review on common rapid test for HIV and STIs, substance use and experience sharing on case management of chemsex. Speakers included Dr. Brian CHENG from DH Social Hygiene Service, Dr. Sheldon FUNG and Dr. Alfred SIT from RRC and Mr. Kevin LEE from SACH-IV of Tung Wah Group of Hospitals.

