Social network strategy to promote HIV testing and linkage to double cascade services among adolescent men who have sex with men and transgender women in Thailand

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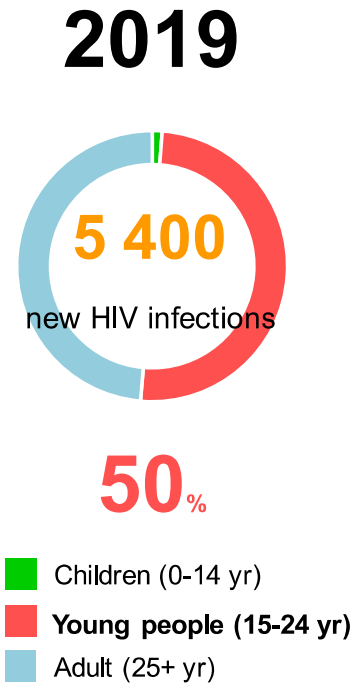
Background

Half of new HIV infections in 2019 occurred among young adolescent (15-24 yr)



Young adolescent especially MSM and TGW are key population to promote HIV testing for early diagnosis and treatment

Barrier to HIV testing among young MSM and TGW[1]

- Vulnerable to and affected by HIV
- Limited ability to navigate to medical services
- Many concerns: their sexual debut, suffer from gender identity-related stigma and privacy

Source: Prepared by www.aidsdatahub.org based on UNAIDS. (2020). UNAIDS 2019 HIV Estimates and UNAIDS. (2020). UNAIDS Data 2020.

Chikwari CD, et al. Curr Opin HIV AIDS. 2018;13(3):257-64.

Background

WHO recommended HIV testing service delivery approaches

HTS is an important gateway to treatment and prevention

Facility-based: TB, STI, family planning/contraceptive services

Community-based

UPDATED Provider-assisted referral

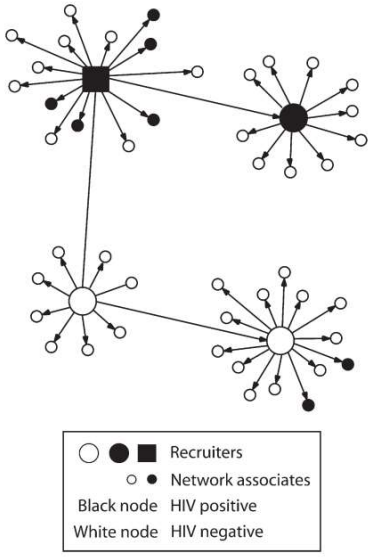
NEW Social network-based approaches

UPDATED HIV self-testing

Slide courtesy of WHO HTS guidelines – presentation part 1

Social network strategy (SNS): same social network **share similar risks and risk behaviors** for HIV infection

They know and trust each other that **same as adolescent population**



Kimbrough LW, et al. Am J Public Health. 2009;99(6):1093-9.

Objective

- **Primary objective**
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of SNS to promote HIV testing and linkage of YMSM and YTGW to HIV services and described character of network member (NM) and their recruiter.
- **Secondary objective**
  - Evaluate the impact of social network strategies in increasing linkage of YMSM and YTGW to double cascade HIV services
    - Prevention cascade
    - Treatment cascade

Research Methodology

- **Study design:** A effectiveness-implementation study design
- **Population:** YMSM and YTGW aged 15-24 years at adolescent-friendly HIV care clinics (Buddy CU clinic)
  - Recruiter: Good rapport and comfortable discussing HIV with peers
  - Network member (NM): Behavior risk for HIV infection such as multiple sex partners or condomless
- **Duration**: 12 months
- **Study sites**: King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital, Bangkok, Thailand.
- **Statistical analysis**
  - Number of NMs recruited by recruiters and prevalence of HIV infection were collected. Outcome measures included effectiveness of SNS measured by proportion of first-time testers among participants enrolled. SNS is considered effective when proportions exceed 50%.