Effectiveness of Community-led Sex-Positive Campaign on HIV Testing for Young Men who have Sex with Men (YMSM) in Metro Manila, Philippines

Lord-Art Florenz Lomarda1,2, Joseph Cadelina1,2, Ronivin Pagtakhan1, Philip Tanpoco Jr.1
Love Yourself, Inc., Manila, Philippines; 2APCOM, Bangkok, Thailand

BACKGROUND
In a predominantly Catholic country like the Philippines, HIV prevention campaigns use stigma and fear to educate the public about HIV. There is an absence of sex-positive HIV prevention efforts in the Philippines that use the internet and social media to engage YMSM.

METHOD
A website with an interactive map of MSM-friendly partner clinics, sexual health information, and videos promoting safer sex attitudes were created to provide information for those who want to learn more about their sexual health and know where to get tested for free.

Offline activation events promoting testMNL is always in partnership with bigger events (e.g. Pride March) to attract more YMSM.

Sponsored posts on social media containing the testMNL link and/or video were used to target YMSM in Metro Manila to lead them to the website. Here we present and analyze the HIV testing data by the partner clinics and website analytics.

RESULTS
The campaign from February to October 2017 reached 46,910 individuals to learn about HIV testing in Metro Manila via www.testMNL.org; partner clinics report a total of 18,369 individuals were tested for HIV (38.25% or 7,026 are YMSM), while 3,343 YMSM turned out positive (19.11%) and are now receiving treatment.

On social media, testMNL created 79,934+ views on campaign videos on Facebook and YouTube, 7,642 Facebook likes, and 3,155 Twitter followers. Partner clinics also reported an average increase in HIV testing of 62.05% compared to previous months the year before. Meetings with community groups, clinical partners, private partners and YMSM also reported the effectiveness of the campaign in their engagements on the importance of sexual health promotion, creating a shift to a more sex-positive environment in the gay community in Metro Manila.

CONCLUSIONS
The campaign concludes the need for more community-led sex-positive campaigns that will educate YMSM about their sexual health and encourage them to get tested for HIV. Scale up of the program is needed to provide more opportunity to develop new campaign messages that address key barriers to HIV continuum of care.

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CONTACT
Lord-Art Lomarda
lab@loveyourself.ph
+63 923 960 3999

PHOTO DESCRIPTION
A. testMNL videos on YouTube (testMNL)
B. testMNL offline activation at Boracay, Philippines
C. testMNL RedIcon YouTube Video
D. testMNL & LoveYourself Pride March "10" Volunteers