JOM Test and Chemsex Online Intervention: knowledge and lessons gained from implementation and community engagement

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HIVST as part of Differentiated HIV Services for Key Populations in Malaysia
• Making HIV testing easier and friendlier
• Linkage to care; online to offline
Community feedback creates peer motivation

I received my Oral HIV Self-Test from Jom-test.com today. Thank you @uequals2u for posted and keep on disseminating this very useful information. Simply register and get your FREE HIV Self-Test Kit at your doorstep now! Knowing your status is better than not. #RTplease
Continuous engagement normalize HIV testing
Chemsex Online Intervention

- Closed door Forum on Chemsex for MSM and TG, Nov 2018
- Formation of Chemsex TWG, July 2019
- IAS Educational Fund Workshop, October 2019
- TWC Meeting on the Chemsex cohort study, Nov 2019
- Development of Chemsex Online intervention pilot project, Jan 2020
- Community Consultation, February 2020
- Ethics and Protocol approval, October 2020
- Project Kick Off, Dec 2020
Outcomes from closed door forum and community consultations

- More information gathering/compilation on chemsex
- Networking
- Decriminalisation – need an update and follow up on the current initiatives on this as it is relevant to this issue
- Identify key people in the community and provide them with safer drug use info
- Train counsellors from the community themselves
- Public awareness on importance of mental health
- Information dissemination to the community about drug use among KP
- Support in a safe space to provide virtual intervention
- Social media intervention and on apps popular with MSM
- TWG for chemsex involving all interested parties
- Harm Reduction, Syringe exchange program?
- (RDS to recruit etc and those who are negative referred to PrEP and monitor accordingly...)
- Spiritual support
- Need specific intervention for youth
Chapter 24: Chemsex and HIV

This chapter is based on an unpublished document written by Pascal Tanguay for APOCIM and www.testbkk.org/en/stay-safe#chemsex.

What is Chemsex?

Chemsex refers to sexual activities under the influence of drugs either taken immediately before or during sex. Chemsex in Malaysia often happens via online dating app hook-ups. These apps are also used to buy and sell drugs for chemsex which are referred to as ‘stuff’ or ‘barangs’. The terms used to refer to chemsex on online dating apps include; high fun, hi fun, chem fun, chem, CF, chilling, chill, aka, frozen, etc. Emoticons are also used to refer to chemsex, especially those depicting snow, ice or snowflakes, planes or rockets. A common activity for chemsex users in Malaysia is “party and play”. This refers to chemsex parties, often organised by pushers/dealers themselves and involving a small closed knit group of “participants”. Additional people can only join by invitation by an existing member. Chemsex is also closely associated with the MSM party scene of “circuits parties” which are major clubbing events/parties that occur in major cities which are relatively tolerant to MSM, such as Bangkok, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Taipei. Drugs for chemsex are taken during the parties and eventually may lead to sexual encounters and so-called “orgies” (group sex). In Malaysia, such parties do not happen on such a big scale, although chem is also a feature at MSM clubbing venues. Many Malaysian MSM frequent the “circuits parties” especially in Bangkok, due to their proximity and affordability. This association has led to the term “party drug” being used as a synonym for chemsex.

Drugs of choice vary, but crystal methamphetamine (ice), amphetamine, and GHB/GBL are popular among gay men in Malaysia and other Asian cities. (refer to table 11)

Why do people use chemsex/party drugs?

People use drugs for many reasons, including reduced inhibitions, greater confidence, increased sexual pleasure/desire/libido/stamina and greater sociability.

MEMAHAMI HIV & POPULASI TERTUMPU DI MALAYSIA

Kebanyakan datil ibah jenayah di bawah undang-undang Malaysia. Ini termasuk mengguna, menyimpan, membeli & menjual dadah. Ujian ar kennic diaktifka semasa operasi dijual hiburan atau roadblock. Seorang boleh dicabut positif sehingga beberapa minggu selepas penggunaan dadah.

Thread Reader App @threadreadernl - Sep 19, 2019

Replying to @queualziu

Kebanyakan dadah ibah jenayah di bawah undang-undang Malaysia. Ini termasuk mengguna, menyimpan, membeli & menjual dadah. Ujian ar kennic diaktifka semasa operasi dijual hiburan atau roadblock. Seorang boleh dicabut positif sehingga beberapa minggu selepas penggunaan dadah.

Replying to @queualziu

Terdapat beberapa dadah yang digunakan untuk chemsex termasuk: crystal methamphetamine, amphetamine, GHB/GBL, ketamine dan lain-lain. Alkohol juga biasanya diambil bersama.

Thread Reader App @threadreadernl - Sep 19, 2019

Replying to @maggiehambrony

Hi you can read it here: Thread by @queualziu: "CHEMSEX menjadi kecanduan kepada aktiviti seksual yang termasuk penggunaan dadah sebelum atau semasa seks. Di Malaysia, kebanyakan dadah ibah jenayah di bawah undang-undang Malaysia. Ini termasuk mengguna, menyimpan, membeli & menjual dadah. Ujian ar kennic diaktifka semasa operasi dijual hiburan atau roadblock. Seorang boleh dicabut positif sehingga beberapa minggu selepas penggunaan dadah.

Have a good day."
Key recommendations

- Interventions need to evolve according to the development of technologies and current situations, to make it easier, safer, effective and sustainable tailored to the needs of different target groups.

- Community response through NGOs, CBOs and other social groups play important roles to build trust in engaging Key Populations that are highly, stigmatized and criminalized.

- Increase the collaborative efforts between different sectors; SCO, Governments, private sectors, research, community leaders and relevant parties.

- Continuous advocacy efforts to break barriers to services such as stigma and discrimination, criminalization and incarcerations.

- Evidence based interventions should be scaled up and supported at the highest level (funding and policy)