The HIV/AIDS epidemic among MSM in Japan: Background & gay NGO responses

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National Surveillance Data 2007
Mode of transmission by year

Mode of infection of Japanese male HIV cases and AIDS patients, 1985-2007, Japan

a. HIV cases
- Heterosexual contact
- Homosexual contact
- Unknown

b. AIDS patients

National Surveillance Data 2007
Homosexual transmission by age & year

Japanese male HIV cases by age group and mode of infection, 1985-2007, Japan

Homosexual contact

- Age group
  - 15-19 years
  - 20-29 years
  - 30-39 years
  - 40-49 years
  - 50-59 years
  - > 60 years

Cases

Year
National Surveillance Data 2007
HIV infection among MSM by year & area

Tokyo
Osaka (Kinki) region
Tokai
Kyushu
Sero-prevalence among MSM samples
Osaka, Tokyo and Nagoya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place &amp; Year</th>
<th>HIV prev %</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Osaka</td>
<td>2000 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>2002 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagoya</td>
<td>2002 (1)</td>
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Gay friendly HIV testing site
Gay festival & testing event

Why the increase in MSM?  
Inadequacies in the early response

• Early HIV prevention materials failed to meet the needs of MSM
• Lack of sexuality training for health center staff conducting HIV testing
• Low levels of gay community organizing and HIV researchers willing to work on HIV issues
• Poor partnerships between HIV epidemiologists and gay groups
• Low levels of government support and funding
Japanese HIV Policy

- MSM have been included as a special needs group in national HIV policy since 2000
- Japan Foundation for AIDS Prevention is the government funded NGO for HIV prevention, though it has no targeted MSM position
- Conservativeness of Ministry of Education Ministry means that discussion of homosexuality in HIV and human rights curriculum continues to be difficult
Gay commercial venues in Osaka

**Doyama: All ages**
- Bars: 135
- Clubs: 5
- Saunas: 13
- Shops: 7

**Minami: Older**
- Bars: 46
- Saunas: 3
- Shops: 4

**Shin Sekai: Older**
- Bar: 42(8)
- Saunas: 3
- Shops: 1

**Osaka Total**
- Bars: 189
- Clubs: 5
- Saunas: 20
- Shops: 12

MSM population estimates in 2007

33,000 MSM customers come to gay commercial areas (estimation) according to social geographical population counting and interviews (Yamada 2007)
MASH Osaka: How we work & what we do

Gay Community

- Club/Bar
- Gay sauna
- Internet networks

Newspaper / Poster
- Condom Kit
- Internet
- Drop-in-center
- Leaflets / Poster

Lecture  Workshop  Peer-Counseling  Community Programs

MASH Osaka

- Members of NGOs/ Community
- HIV Epidemiologists
- Regional Government
MASH Osaka Activities

community center

STI workshop

Autumn festival
## Evaluation of MASH Osaka Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Rating 2</th>
<th>Rating 3</th>
<th>Rating 4</th>
<th>Rating 5</th>
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*(Osaka Club Survey Kimura 2008)*
Current focus □: Older MSM
Low condom use & low NGO awareness

Used condoms ‘everytime’
(insertive and receptive anal sex with regular and casual partners in past 6 months)

(Osaka Bar survey Ichikawa 2007)
Current focus □: Sauna users
Past 6 months casual sex partners meeting place

(Osaka Bar survey Ichikawa 2007)
Issues for the future

• Reliance on research funding which is short-term and directed by research goals
• Funding - Extension of activities beyond 6 cities
• A national body for national co-ordination of Ministries, research and NGOs
• Better co-ordination at the local level between local health departments, health centers, and NGOs