

CHEMSEX AND ASSOCIATED SEXUAL HEALTH BEHAVIORAL OUTCOMES AMONG MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN IN HONG KONG

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Background:

Chemsex, the practice of consuming psychoactive substances to enhance sexual experiences, has been observed predominantly among men who have sex with men (MSM). While its prevalence is noted, the correlation between chemsex and behavioral outcomes, such as condomless anal sex and the frequency of HIV and other STIs testing, remains underexplored, particularly within the Chinese demographic.

Methods:

This investigation utilized baseline data from a randomized controlled trial assessing an interactive eHealth intervention for chemsex prevention in Hong Kong. Eligible participants were required to be MSM, cisgender males, at least 18 years old, and proficient in Chinese. The study focused on three outcomes: engagement in condomless anal sex, the occurrence of HIV testing, and the occurrence of other STIs testing within the past 3 months.

Results:

Our analysis of 316 MSM participants revealed that 16.1% reported chemsex, 51.3% engaged in condomless anal sex, 32.9% underwent HIV testing, and 20.3% had other STIs testing, all within the last 3 months. The multiple logistic regression analysis indicated a significant association between chemsex and increased likelihood of engaging in condomless anal sex (aOR: 40.9, p-value: <0.001). Identifying as homosexual rather than bisexual (aOR: 2.15, p-value: 0.044) and being in a relationship (aOR: 2.25, p-value: 0.002) were also associated with higher instances of condomless anal sex. Additionally, those reporting chemsex were more likely to have been tested for other STIs in the last three months (aOR: 2.63, p-value: 0.009). In contrast, no significant association was found between chemsex and undergoing HIV testing.

Conclusion:

The study highlights a link between chemsex and the practice of condomless anal sex. Considering the limited availability of PrEP within Hong Kong's public health system and its relatively low usage compared to other regions, it is imperative to intensify efforts to promote consistent condom use among MSM engaging in chemsex.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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