

COMMUNITY-BASED ORAL FLUID HIV TESTING AS A POTENTIAL STRATEGY TO IMPROVE HIV CARE CASCADE AMONG MSM IN INDONESIA

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Background: HIV testing rates among key populations in Indonesia, including men who have sex with men (MSM), remain low. This study aimed to explore the potential of introducing community-based oral fluid self-testing (OFT) to improve the HIV care cascade among MSM in Bali.

Methods: This intervention study is part of the HATI study, a prospective cohort study aimed at improving the HIV care cascade among key populations in Indonesia. OFT was conducted in Bali from January to December 2018 among MSM. OFT systems were distributed by outreach workers at the Kerti Praja Foundation using supervised and unsupervised methods. The inclusion criteria included MSM who had never tested for HIV, or had undergone HIV testing >6 months ago, and refused clinic-based HIV testing and counseling (HTC). Individuals with reactive results were referred to the HTC clinic for confirmatory tests, and individuals confirmed positive were offered treatment. Data on the HIV testing cascade including proportions of those who underwent self-testing, showed reactive results, underwent confirmatory tests, showed HIV-positive results, and received treatment were summarised.

Results: Of 1816 eligible individuals, 596 (32.8%) received HTC at participating clinics. The remaining individuals were approached for follow-up, with 1001 individuals being offered OFT. Among them, 813 received the self-test kit (supervised, 756; unsupervised, 57; median age, 29.0 years). Among these 813 individuals, 83 (10.2%) showed reactive results, 52 (62.7%) of whom underwent confirmatory tests. Among these 52 individuals, 47 (90.4%) were confirmed HIV-positive, 43 (91.5%) individuals were registered in the HIV-positive cohort of the HATI study, and 39 (90.7%) received treatment.

Conclusion: Our findings show the potential utility of scaling up HIV testing among MSM through a community-based approach involving HIV self-test kit distribution. Future studies should consider exploring unsupervised methods with a focus on campaign methods to reach hidden MSM groups.

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