

# PREFERENCES OF MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN TOWARDS THE DISTRIBUTION OF HIV SELF-TEST KITS THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKS: A DISCRETE CHOICE EXPERIMENT

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## Background:

Social network distribution of HIV self-test (HIVST) kits utilises personal connections within social networks to increase HIV testing among marginalised populations, such as men who have sex with men (MSM). Using a discrete choice experiment (DCE), we identified factors influencing influence MSM's willingness and decision-making in HIVST kit distribution.

## Methods:

An online DCE survey was conducted among MSM in Australia (December 2023–May 2024), recruited via online/offline advertisements. Participants completed seven choice sets, each containing two hypothetical scenarios for HIVST kits distribution described by attributes such as cost, location, training, support system, and self-reporting methods. Mixed logit models and latent class analysis explore preference heterogeneity across language (English vs. non-English first language) and nativity (Australian-born vs. overseas-born) groups.

## Results:

There were 251 participants, including 140 overseas-born MSM, with a mean age of 36.5 (SD= 11.9). Participants who did not speak English as their first language (29/251, 12%) showed a lower preference for paid HIVST kits (\$30 or \$60 out-of-pocket cost for three kits) and online video chats with sexual health professionals as pre-test support. Overseas-born participants also preferred not to attend 30-minute or one-hour training sessions on distributing HIVST kits to social contacts. They also did not like accessing HIVST kits from hospitals. Class 1 participants ('Cost-conscious and minimal support seekers'; 61.7%) were willing to pay up to AUD 30 for three kits, while Class 2 ('Subsidy-dependent and structured support seekers'; 38.3%) strongly resisted costs and self-reporting results by phone.

## Conclusion:

To increase participation in social network HIVST kit distribution, kits should be free or subsidised. Tailored support systems should prioritise overseas-born MSM with limited English proficiency.

**Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

*JO and EPFC are supported by the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Emerging Investigator Grant (GNT1193955 for JJO and GNT1172873 for EPFC). CKF is supported by an Australian NHMRC Leadership Investigator Grant (GNT1172900). YZ is supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) scholarship.*