

## **WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE: ENGAGING ASIAN MSM INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION EVENTS**

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**Background/Purpose:** Divergence in HIV notification rates between overseas-born men who have sex with men (MSM) and Australian-born MSM has been a cause of concern for ending HIV. A significant portion of new diagnoses in overseas-born men are in international students from Asian cultural backgrounds. The Gay Asian Men Community Survey 2018 showed that Asian MSM were at higher risk of HIV transmission due to their unsafe sex practices and gaps of access to sexual health information and services.

**Approach:** The CALD GMAG, consists of representatives from government and non-government organisations to coordinate HIV and STIs health promotion interventions targeting gay men from CALD backgrounds. In 2018, the group conducted two consultations, one with stakeholders and another with Asian MSM international students (AMIS) to better understand how they access sexual health information and services. Connectedness with other MSM international students and the mainstream gay community were also a focus of the consultations

**Outcome/Impact:** Results from the consultation highlights the role of friends, online information and social media in improving social connectedness of AMIS and providing sexual health information and services. A working group comprised of AMIS was established in September 2018. The working group meets monthly and is currently planning a social event for MSM international students. The event, *When Worlds Collide* aims to provide a safe space for MSM international students to meet, share experiences with each other and improve sexual health knowledge through engaging activities such as sexual health trivia and speed friending. Pre and post surveys will evaluate the event and suggest future projects.

**Innovation/Significance:** This project has allowed a meaningful and culturally appropriate engagement with AMIS about sexual health and social aspects. MSM international student peer mentor group will be established following the social event to engage with other MSM international students face-to-face and online.

**Disclosure of Interest Statement:** CALD Gay Men's Action Group consists of representatives from SESLHD, SLHD, SWSLHD, WSLHD, NSLHD, ACON, Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS), Kirby Institute and Centre for Social Research in Health (CSRH). ACON is funded by NSW Ministry of Health.