SRIKANDI: A PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT WITH WOMEN FROM INDONESIA TO INCREASE HIV TESTING

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Background: In the last decade, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) notifications in Australia have been increasing among people born in Southeast Asia (SEA). For women from SEA, more than two thirds are diagnosed late. Between 2011-2017 those from Indonesia had the highest number of HIV notifications in Western Australia (WA) among those people born in SEA. The literature suggests that migrant women experience difficulties accessing culturally acceptable health interventions and services. It is critical that affected and priority populations are active participants in the design of research and prevention efforts.

Methods: *Srikandi* is a three-year project to co-design an intervention to increase HIV testing uptake with women from Indonesia living in Western Australia. Utilising a participatory action research methodology, the project involves community researchers, representatives from relevant organisations and broader community members from Indonesia in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the intervention.

Results: Six Indonesian women in WA from a variety of backgrounds have been recruited as community researchers (authors of this abstract – the *Srikandi* group). Progress to date has involved an environmental audit of HIV prevention resources and services, and focus groups with women from Indonesia on the pathways and enablers to HIV testing. This will progress to the co-design of an intervention with community and organisational representatives.

This presentation will describe the process involved in establishing a participatory action research project to co-design an intervention, and the early challenges and learnings from the experience.

Conclusion: Australia has a goal of virtually eliminating transmission of HIV by 2022. To achieve this, meaningful involvement of emerging priority communities, including migrants is critical. The process of co-designing an intervention is likely of interest to others working to address health inequities among marginalised groups.

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