



Commercial Sex Venue Based Testing:

The New York City
Bathhouse Experience

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Men*s Sexual Health Project

M*SHP

What is M*SHP?

- Collaborative HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infection Testing and Care Connection Program co-localized with two NYC bathhouses (CSV)
- Rapid HIV testing as well as pooled plasma viral load testing offered to clients recruited from diverse sources:
 - New Venue Clients and Repeat Clients
 - Internet Outreach
 - Word of Mouth and Press related
- Directly linked to (and funded by) Bellevue Hospital (HHC) and NYU CFAR. In kind services by NYC PHL/DOHMH.
- 1306 visits, 962 unique clients
 - 3.6% with newly diagnosed HIV (37% recent or acute)
 - 26% Recent Infection by STARHS
 - 11% Acute by pooled plasma VL (.4% of all clients)
 - 6.6% with STI

Creating a Program

M*SHIP

Initially a pilot program funded by a supplement to NYU Center for AIDS Research, the data generated resulted in interest by NYC DOHMH to maintain this program as a clinical service. This interest resulted in funding through Bellevue/Health and Hospitals Corporation and extension of the clinical license of Bellevue Virology Clinic to the bathhouses as “diagnostic extensions.”

* Challenges

- Venue buy-in (space)
- Community buy-in
- Institutional buy-in
- Logistics
- Funding
- Test Quality Assurance
- Connection to care

* Our Solutions

- Venue collaboration
- Community sensitivity
- Contextualization
- Clear SOP & evaluation
- Shifting sand
- Quality standards
- Global linkage

Maintaining a Program

M*STEP

Maintenance involves keeping and improving funding, staffing, and infrastructure to provide a level of service adequate for successful testing and connection to care. The relationship between healthcare and CSV management /clients is fragile and requires “white glove handling.” Bathhouses are not traditional health venues so testing goals need to be realistic and contextual.

* Challenges

- Adequate staffing
- Staffing “PTSD”
- Funding
- “Safer” Sex
- Connection to Care
- Logistical issues
- Need to test more
- Quality of service
- Compelling need

*Our Solutions

- Staffing quality
- Staffing decompression
- Diversification
- “Smarter” Sex
- Systems solutions
- Hands on management
- Need to test better
- Quality evaluation
- Integrate research

Evolving a Program

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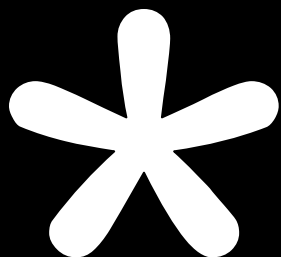
The NYC HIV epidemic among MSM has acquired a younger face of color. M*SHP was testing a racially diverse group (50.9% racial or ethnic minorities) but men older than the emerging demographics of HIV in NYC. New approaches were needed to reach out, beyond the venues, to better utilize program services. Could M*SHP be utilized as an “open clinic” in a “member only” space?

* Challenges

- NYC demographics
- Internet outreach
- Online social networks
- Other “risk places”
- Members only (\$\$\$)
- Word of mouth
- Mental health

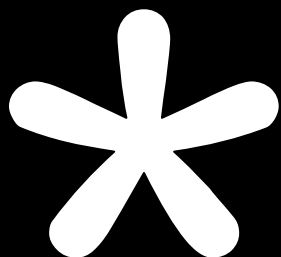
*Our Solutions

- Go where the youth are
- Partner with “hook up sites”
- Facebook and KOL invites
- Promote externally
- FREE entry to testing room
- Generate press
- Referral system



Special thanks to the venues
and clients who have allowed
MSHP to continue providing
this service.

Without NYC DOHMH and
Bellevue/HHC this program
would (and could) not exist.



**MEN'S SEXUAL
HEALTH PROJECT**

BELLEVUE HOSPITAL
NYU LANGONE

M*SH*P

RAPID HIV

RESULTS IN 20 MINUTES

VIRAL LOAD

DECREASED WINDOW PERIOD
COMPARED TO STANDARD TESTING

& STD TESTING

GONORRHEA, CHLAMYDIA,
& SYPHILIS



Photo: Joe Oppedisano

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NO CLUB ENTRY FEE FOR TESTING

WWW.HIVINFOSOURCE.ORG/TESTINGPROJECT

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