

Integrated HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C Testing during the 2015 European Testing Week

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BACKGROUND

In the WHO European Region, it is estimated that approximately 2.5 million people are living with HIV (PLHIV) [1] and around 13 and 15 million are living with hepatitis B and C, respectively [2]. Around one in three is unaware that they are living with HIV [3, 4] and one in three people has been exposed to either HBV or HCV [2]. European HIV-Hepatitis Testing Week (ETW) is a partnership between civil society, health care professionals, governmental and other policy organisations. A dedicated website (www.testingweek.eu) provides a hub for interested organisations to sign up and download materials to support planned activities.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

ETW 2015 took place from 20-27 November 2015. All participating organisations were invited to complete an online evaluation survey with questions about their carried out ETW activities. Those who were carrying out testing were asked to report testing data. Data were entered into the Research Electronic Data Capture system (REDCap) hosted at CHIP, Rigshospitalet, University of Copenhagen. Five electronic survey reminders were sent prior to the survey deadline, 15 January 2016. Data were extracted in Excel format from REDCap and descriptive statistics were produced as frequencies and respective proportions in Excel.

RESULTS

Of the 417 organisations that signed up, 194 from 39 countries submitted the evaluation survey (46.5%). The majority of respondents were NGOs (65.5%) followed by health care professionals/hospitals/clinics (18.0%) and governmental and other policy organisations (9.3%). The majority of respondents carried out testing activities (**Figure 1**) and awareness-raising activities. Several respondents reported testing for more than one of the three conditions during ETW but few of the participants that carried out testing reported data on testing (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Organisations carrying out testing activities during ETW (N=194)

	HIV testing	HIV & HBV testing	HIV & HCV testing	HBV & HCV testing	HIV, HBV & HCV testing	Reporting testing data
Organisations N (%)	158 (81%)	37 (19%)	59 (30%)	36 (19%)	35 (18%)	34 (21.5%)

The percentage of respondents reporting increase in testing during ETW compared to an average week was 78% for HIV, 74% for HBV and 70% for HCV. ETW has brought forward many innovative best practice examples from all over Europe of how testing and awareness-raising can be done. Examples include designing of coffee cup sleeves promoting HIV testing distributed to coffee shops, dissemination sessions in the streets, use of rapid tests, e.g. via a mobile clinic doing outreach testing to MSM and collaboration across sectors and between organisations and institutions.

CONCLUSIONS

Participating organisations reported significant increases in testing during ETW as well as many performed innovative best practice examples to raise awareness. The campaign website received 16,382 page views and there were 1,063 downloads of ETW materials. ETW has proven to be an efficient initiative in uniting Europe in promoting testing and in increasing testing for HIV, HBV and HCV. In order to be able to better monitor testing offer, uptake and positivity rates of the testing population, it is recommended that organisations collect and report this data.

REFERENCES

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