

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) in a South East Asian University Hospital (One Year Experience)

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Background



Majority of PrEP users are in the United States
(*source: UNAIDS*)

PrEP implementation in SE Asia:

- Thailand: >6,500 PrEP users on follow up (*source: HIV-NAT Symposium, Bangkok, 2018*)
- rest of SE Asia lagging behind

Singapore:

Prior to 2016, PrEP available only from a handful of private clinics at very high cost (USD 900 per month)

BEPREP CLINIC

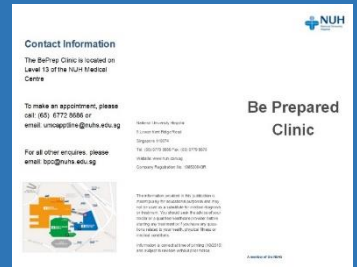
National University Hospital

sexual health clinic providing

- HIV/STI risk assessment
- STI testing and treatment
- PrEP
- PEP
- Linkage to HIV care

open in November 2016 with publicity in national media and at anonymous HIV testing sites

- No direct publicity on dating platforms (Grindr, Blued) or in gay saunas/bars



One Year Experience

Our clients:

- 90% MSM
- 10% heterosexual men
- no women
- no transgender persons
- no commercial sex workers

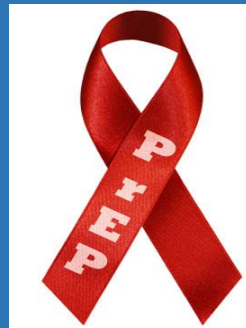
Reasons for accessing PrEP service

Inconsistent condom use	10 (50%)
HIV discordant relationship	5 (25%)
Recent PEP	3 (15%)
Stealthing	2 (10%)

Concerns when accessing our service:

- cost
- stigmatization of gay sex by healthcare workers
- confidentiality
- perceived government's access to HIV test result

low uptake in first 12 months



One Year Experience

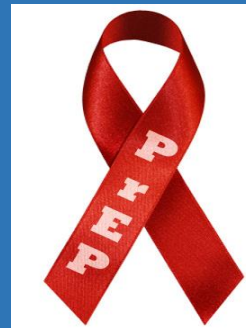
18 (90%) clients started PrEP:

daily PrEP	11 (69%)
event-driven PrEP	5 (31%)
PrEP from official pharmacy	7 (44%)
PrEP from unofficial sources	9 (56%)

no HIV seroconversions

low STI rates

low *lost-to-follow up* rates (10%)



Conclusions

low uptake of PrEP in our clinic in spite of publicity

significant number of clients accessed PrEP living in an HIV discordant relationship (importance of discussion of HIV transmission prevention in HIV clinics)

underrepresentation of commercial sex workers and transgender persons in PrEP service in Singapore