



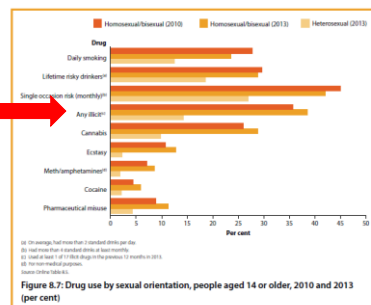
**Burnet Institute**  
Medical Research. Practical Action.

## Drug use and sex: the importance of asking the right questions in sexual risk behaviour surveillance among gay and bisexual men

K Ryan, A Wilkinson, D Leitinger, A Pedrana, M Hellard, M Stoové

### Drug use among GBM in Australia

- Homosexual/bisexual report at least 2x greater recent use of illicit drugs compared to heterosexuals
- Gay Community Periodic Survey (GCPS) provides data on drug use (among other characteristics) over time
- Much drug use research among GBM is in the context of HIV transmission



National Drug Strategy Household Survey

## Estimating drug use among GBM in Australia

Surveys ask about drug use with

- different questions,
- different recall periods
- different research questions/aims

Alcohol and/or drug use at time of exposure

None Alcohol Speed Crystal GHB Viagra

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Victorian NPEP consultation form

**Drug Use** In the last year OR since your last test...

Have you had sex while under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs:  Yes  No

E.g. Alcohol, Poppers/Amyl, Crystal Meth, Marijuana, Ecstasy, Cocaine, Heroin, GHB, Amphetamines.

Other/s: \_\_\_\_\_

M clinic risk assessment form

In the last 6 months, did you have anal sex without a condom while affected by any of the following?  
(select all that apply)

- Alcohol  
 Amyl/poppers  
 Viagra/Cialis etc.  
 Cannabis  
 Ecstasy/MDMA  
 Methamphetamine (e.g. speed, ice)  
 Cocaine  
 GHB/G  
 Casveject  
 None

PrEP-X survey

61. How often have you used these drugs in the last 6 months?

	Never	Once/twice	At least monthly	Every week
Amyl/poppers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marijuana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Viagra/Cialis etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ecstasy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cocaine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crystal meth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GHB	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ketamine (special K)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heroin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steroids	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other drug	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

65. In the last 6 months, how often have you used party drugs for the purpose of sex?

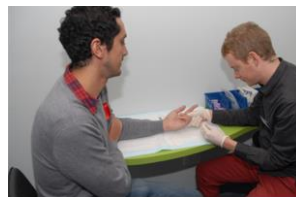
- Every week  Once or twice  
 At least monthly  Never

Gay Community Periodic Survey

## PRONTO!

HIV testing service in Melbourne, Australia

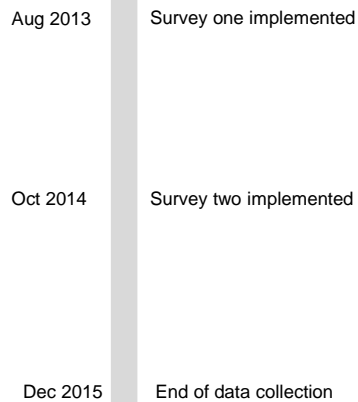
- Opened 13 August 2013
- Rapid point of care test
- Peer led
- Community based
- Shop front
- After hours (4-8pm Mon-Thurs, 1-5pm Sat)
- Free



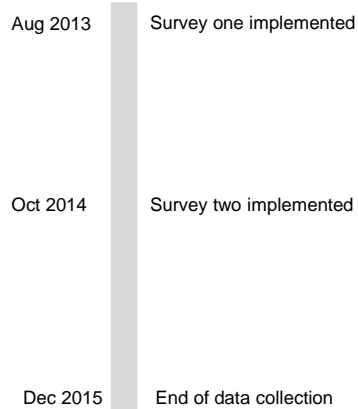
## PRONTO!

### HIV testing service in Melbourne, Australia

- Opened 13 August 2013



## Aims



-Describe the process of refining data collection on the use of drugs by GBM in a surveillance system

-Explore the impact of these changes on the data collected in a surveillance system



## Victorian Primary Care Network of Sentinel Surveillance

- PRONTO! was enrolled in an established sentinel surveillance system
- At every appointment clients complete a behavioural survey before being seen by the test facilitator
  - The survey at PRONTO! is a modified version of that used at other sites
  - Survey includes: demographics, testing history, sexual and other risk
  - The test facilitator has the option to view the clients responses

"In the last six months, how often have you used party drugs for the purpose of sex?"

- Consistent with the GCPS



### Drug use among PRONTO! clients

	Drug use question	Sample	% yes
PRONTO!	Party drug used for the purpose of sex	1485 GBM testing August 2013-October 2014	18%

## Drug use among PRONTO! clients, GCPS participants

	Drug use question	Sample	% yes
PRONTO!	Party drug used for the purpose of sex	1485 GBM testing August2013-October 2014	18%
GCPS	Party drug used for the purpose of sex	1872 GBM sampled Jan 2014	16%
	Drugs used		
	Amyl nitrate		37%
	Cannabis		29%
	Viagra		19%
	Cocaine		17%
	Amphetamine		14%
	Methamphetamine		12%

Lee, Gay Community Periodic Survey, Melbourne, 2013

## Drug use among PRONTO! clients, GCPS participants and newly diagnosed men

	Drug use question	Sample	% yes
PRONTO!	Party drug used for the purpose of sex	1485 GBM testing August2013-October 2014	18%
GCPS	Party drug used for the purpose of sex	1872 GBM sampled Jan 2014	16%
	Drugs used		
	Amyl nitrate		37%
	Cannabis		29%
	Viagra		19%
	Cocaine		17%
	Amphetamine		14%
	Methamphetamine		12%
GP clinic in Melbourne	Past month meth use	65 GBM diagnosed with HIV 2011-2013	40%
	Meth use significant cause of HIV infection		85%

Lee, Gay Community Periodic Survey, Melbourne, 2013

Eu, Association between known recent HIV infections and methamphetamine use ( ASK HIM study ) in Melbourne between 2011 and 2013, 2014

## Back to the drawing board...

“In the last six months, how often have you used party drugs for the purpose of sex?”



## Back to the drawing board...

“In the last six months, how often have you used party drugs for the purpose of sex?”

“In the last six months, which of the following have you used before or during sex with men?”

- Alcohol,
- amphetamine,
- amyl nitrate,
- cannabis,
- cocaine,
- ecstasy,
- GHB,
- methamphetamine,
- Viagra



## Back to the drawing board...

"In the last six months, how often have you used party drugs **for the purpose of sex?**"

"In the last six months, which of the following have you used **before or during sex** with men?"

- Alcohol,
- amphetamine,
- amyl nitrate,
- cannabis,
- cocaine,
- ecstasy,
- GHB,
- methamphetamine,
- Viagra



## Any drug use before or during sex, previous six months

		Survey one	Survey two	$\chi^2$
		n(%)	n(%)	
Any drug use	No	1223 (82%)	839 (44%)	
	Yes	262 (18%)	1062 (56%)	<0.01

Any drug use includes methamphetamine, amphetamine, ecstasy, cocaine, GHB, cannabis, amyl nitrate, Viagra

### Any drug use before or during sex, previous six months

		Survey one	Survey two	$\chi^2$
		n(%)	n(%)	
Any drug use	No	1223 (82.4)	839 (44.1)	<0.01
	Yes	262 (17.6)	1062 (55.9)	
	Amyl nitrate		784 (41.2)	
	Cannabis		249 (13.1)	
	Viagra		245 (12.9)	
	Ecstasy		220 (11.6)	
	Methamphetamine		141 (7.4)	
	Cocaine		115 (6.1)	
	GHB		88 (4.6)	
	Amphetamine		51 (2.7)	
	Alcohol		845 (44.5)	

Any drug use includes methamphetamine, amphetamine, ecstasy, cocaine, GHB, cannabis, amyl nitrate, Viagra

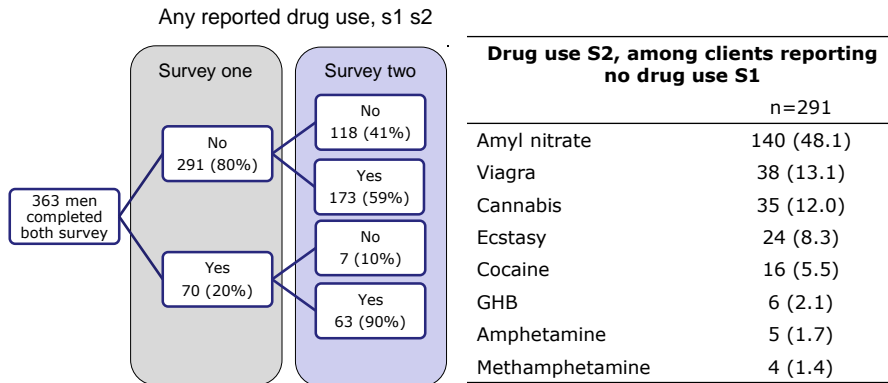
### Is the shift in reported drug use due to the new question or a new population?

		Survey one	Survey two	$\chi^2$
		n(%)	n(%)	
Age group	16-29	693 (46.7)	891 (46.9)	0.89
	30-39	487 (32.8)	610 (32.1)	
	40+	305 (20.5)	400 (21.0)	
Country of birth	Australia	830 (59.9)	1069 (58.1)	0.32
	Other	556 (40.1)	770 (41.9)	
Partner number	One man	185 (12.5)	241 (12.7)	0.79
	2-10 men	1095 (73.7)	1413 (74.3)	
	11+ men	205 (13.8)	247 (13.0)	
Condom use, casual partner	Consistent	806 (54.3)	1010 (53.1)	0.51
	Inconsistent	679 (45.7)	891 (46.9)	
Group sex	No	908 (61.3)	1274 (67.1)	<0.01
	Yes	573 (38.7)	624 (32.9)	



## Exploring the shift in reported drug use

We explored the drug use reported by men who completed BOTH survey one and survey two



## The balance between a burdensome survey and accurate data collection

- In surveillance, we need to be accurate while keeping surveys short
- Answering a survey question involves four stages:
  - Interpret
  - Recall
  - Format answer
  - Report

We need to minimise the effort put in by participants when answering surveillance surveys
- Understanding drug use in this context is about more than just HIV transmission

## Drug use and health promotion in the PRONTO! model

- PRONTO! clients report feel more comfortable discussing their behaviours with peer staff compared to doctors and nurses
- Risk assessment offers an indication of drug use
  - Peer staff can explore this during the consultation
  - Peer staff can provide referrals to counselling and LGBT friendly services
- In survey one, we potentially missed opportunities for health promotion discussion and referral to counselling/support



## To summarise...

- A change to the sentinel surveillance survey question about drug use in the context of sex
  - Increased the percentage reporting drug use in the context of sex
  - Reduced ambiguity in the question
  - Provided greater detail about the drugs used by clients



## Acknowledgements

- PRONTO!
  - All PRONTO! staff
  - VAC management
  - All PRONTO! clients
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  - Supervisors
  - Staff
  - Data management
- Funding
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