Assessing the Added Value of Internet Partner Services for Syphilis and HIV

Kyle T Bernstein, Robert Kohn, Wendy Wolf, Frank Strona, Charles Fann, Susan S Philip

STD Prevention and Control Services
San Francisco Department of Public Health
What are Partner Services?

• Partner Services (PS) are a broad range of services offered to people infected with HIV/AIDS or syphilis including:
  – Confirmation of treatment (syphilis) and HIV test results
  – Discussion of notifying partners of potential HIV/syphilis exposure and offering of 3rd party notification
  – Prophylactic treatment for syphilis partners
  – Provision of referrals to medical care, mental health, substance abuse, and other social services

• One team of Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) provide both HIV and Syphilis PS in San Francisco

• SF has been offering IPS since 1999
Partner Services

Patient Diagnosed with HIV/Syphilis by provider

Safer sex counseling

Confirm receipt of positive HIV test results / ensure syphilis treatment

Provide referrals for medical care, mental health, PEP and other services

SFDPH staff offer partner services

Sex and needle-sharing partner elicitation

Partners located, notified of exposure, and encouraged to be HIV tested and/or prophylactically treated for syphilis
MSM sexual networks and the internet

www.AOL.com
www.manhunt.net
www.man4now.com
www.m4m-world.com
www.pozpersonals.com
www.GAY.com
www.asspig.com
www.misterrightnow.com
www.dudesnude.com
www.BigMuscle.com
www.Adam4Adam.com
www.Men4SexNow.com
**Objective**: Has internet partner services (IPS) been a productive public health activity in San Francisco?

- What proportion of HIV and syphilis index partners are known only by email or web handle?
- Does IPS result in improved partner outcomes?
- Does IPS improve efficiency of partner services?
Internet Partner Services in San Francisco

• Named Partner
  – Index provides name and address or phone number

• Internet Partner
  – Index provides *only* email address or website handle (Manhunt, Adam4Adam)

• Internet Partners → Named Partners
  – DIS contacts Internet partner and obtains phone number/address
Defining “Success”

• Syphilis
  – Brought to Treatment
    • Partner was infected with syphilis and was treated as a result of DIS investigation
  – Epi Treatment
    • Partner was prophylactically treated for syphilis as a result of DIS investigation

• HIV
  – Partner was HIV tested as a result of DIS investigation
Syphilis Internet Partner Services
San Francisco 2006-2011

- 4255 Total Partners
- 3610 Named Partners
- 645 Internet Partners
- 304 Internet → Named Partners
- 129 Partners Brought to Treatment or Epi Treated
- 175 Other Dispos
- 341 Internet Partners

- 15% of Internet Partners
- 42% of Internet Partners
- 47% of Internet Partners

Graph shows the distribution and outcomes of 4255 total partners with 3610 named partners, 645 internet partners, and 304 internet to named partners, with 129 partners brought to treatment or epidemiologically treated, 175 other dispos, and 341 internet partners.
HIV Internet Partner Services
San Francisco 2006-2011

3607 Total Partners

2916 Named Partners

369 Internet Partners

691 Internet Partners

322 Internet → Named Partners

55 Partners HIV tested

267 Other Dispos

19%

47%

17%
Relative Increase in Successful Outcomes from HIV and Syphilis Internet Partner Services, San Francisco 2006-2011

- Syphilis
- HIV
Proportion of Internet Partners Changed to Named Partners that were Subsequently Named Again as Partners, San Francisco 2006-2011

- **Syphilis**
- **HIV**
IPS Outcomes (2006-2011)

• ~1/2 of initial Internet Partners → Named Partners
• Over 40% of initial Internet Partners successfully treated for syphilis
  – 50% of initial Named Partners successfully treated
• IPS associated with:
  – 8% increase in the number of named syphilis partners
  – 11% increase in the number of named HIV partners
  – 7% increase in the number of successfully treated syphilis partners
  – 8% increase in the number of successfully tested HIV partners
• 112 Internet Partners → Named Partners were named again increasing efficiency overtime
Summary

• San Francisco STD has successfully integrated IPS into HIV and syphilis partner services
• Implementing IPS has increased the number of named partners identified and successful outcomes for HIV and syphilis partners
• Being able to search user names and handles further improves the efficiency of San Francisco’s partner services program
Acknowledgements

- SFDPH Syphilis/HIV DIS team
- SFDPH HIV Prevention Section
- Tracey Packer, MPH

kyle.bernstein@sfdph.org
(415) 355-2010