

Atlantic Centre
of Excellence for
Women's Health

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SYMPOSIUM SESSION:

ISSUES RELATED TO HIV AMONG MALES WHO HAVE SEX WITH MALES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Issues related to HIV among males who have sex with males in South Africa

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Where did we go?

The ACEWH has been supporting CIDA IYIP interns Meredith Evans and Fiona Guerra, who are currently wrapping up their placements in Cape Town at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) of South Africa (www.hsrc.ac.za/).

What did we do?

Meredith and Fiona attended "Top2Btm: Changing Manscapes", a two day event that explored advances in treatment as prevention and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), innovations in community-based prevention and social dynamics of males who have sex with other males.

With whom?

Top2Btm: Changing Manscapes was an AIDS Priorities Conference and was hosted by ANOVA Health Institute. Guest speakers from the following institutions presented their research: University of Cape Town, Emory Rollins School of Public Health, City of Johannesburg, ANOVA Health Institute, TB/HIV Care Asso-

ciation, Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation and USAID.



Presentations were followed by lively discussion of the issues.

What was Discussed?

The focus of the conference was public health issues related to males who have sex with males. This issue can affect women because females may have male partner(s) who have sex with other males but may not identify with a particular community e.g. gay, bisexual. Knowledge about males who have sex with males, more specifically the biological, societal and institutionalized forces that influence these sexual relations, can inform how to optimize the health and well-being of males who have sex with males and their female partners.

What key themes emerged?

The first day focused on biomedical interventions (medications and regimens) and how these might be implemented as public health efforts to prevent the spread of HIV. The second day focused much more on the importance of wellness and positive health messaging for males who have sex with males. One of the highlights was having several presentations that sought to integrate biomedical and social innovations at the community level, with a focus on HIV prevention efforts for both HIV-negative and HIV-positive males.

What was the feedback?

There was a positive response to the symposium, with participants from research, health services, community and other stakeholders exchanging ideas on the key themes. You can explore ANOVA's research and community initiatives further here: ww.anovahealth.co.za/.

