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Evaluation of an online human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-prevention intervention to promote HIV-testing among men who have sex with men

Submission date 22/09/2010	**Recruitment status** No longer recruiting	[_] Prospectively registered [_] Protocol [_] Statistical analysis plan [_] Results [_] Individual participant data [_] Record updated in last year
Registration date 20/12/2010	**Overall study status** Completed	
Last Edited 20/12/2010	**Condition category** Infections and Infestations	

Plain English summary of protocol
Not provided at time of registration

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

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Study information

Scientific Title
Evaluation of an online human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-prevention intervention to promote HIV-testing among men who have sex with men: a randomised controlled trial

Study objectives

Aim:
An online randomised controlled trial (RCT) to investigate the effects of a systematically developed online human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-prevention intervention aimed at promoting HIV-testing among men who have sex with men (MSM) in the Netherlands.

Hypotheses:
1. Exposure to the newly developed intervention would lead to a significant increase in participants intention to take an HIV/STI-test (i.e. a Sexual Health Checkup), compared to exposure to the control, a pre-existing online intervention
2. Theory predicts that high intentions towards taking a test increase the chances of actually taking a test. Therefore, compared to the control condition, significantly more participants in the experimental condition would have taken a Sexual Health Checkup at the moment of follow-up (3 months after exposure to one of the interventions).

Rationale:
The theme we chose for our health promotion program was: "Queermasters, the online gay health show". In consultation with our linkage group, it was considered a theme that fitted well with our target population. The concept of an online gay health show allowed us to include different rounds for different program components, virtual relational agents in terms of a show master and his assistant, and a virtual MSM audience in the background representing a reference group, and expressing an injunctive social norm.

In our program, we deliberately avoided the use of risk information and risk communication as means of motivating participants to take an HIV-test. This decision was taken on the basis of our qualitative and quantitative findings. Additional empirical evidence in support of our decision comes from the results of a study that indicated that increasing the perceived risk for HIV-infection might not be a successful method to motivate (at risk) individuals to take an HIV-test.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
The Psychology Ethics Committee (Ethische commissie Psychologie [ECP]) of the Faculty of Psychology & Neuroscience, Maastricht University approved on the 12th December 2006 (ref: ECP 48 / 3-4-2006-4)

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Randomised active controlled parallel group trial

Study type(s)
Screening

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) testing

Interventions
Recruitment:

1. Online recruitment:
Banners were placed on several large and popular Dutch MSM websites, a click-through button was placed on the home page of the most popular Dutch MSM chat website (www.chatboy.nl), and a chatter's profile was placed in the Chatboy chatbox inviting visitors to participate.

2. Offline recruitment:
Advertisements were placed in the popular Dutch MSM press.

An online randomised controlled trial was set up in which for one month, visitors of the website queermasters.nl (n = 5030) were randomly assigned to one of two groups.

1. Experimental group: A newly developed intervention -
The scope of our program focused primarily on the advantages of regular sexual health checkups and the fact that most other MSM favor regular checkups, to motivate participants to take up regular sexual health checkups and consequently get tested for HIV.

2. Control group: An existing online HIV-test promotion intervention -
The scope of the existing program focused on both risk information and risk communication to motivate participants to take an HIV- and an STI-test.

3 months later participants were invited for follow-up.

Intervention Type
Other

Phase
Not Applicable

Primary outcome(s)
1. Intention to take an HIV-test within the next three months, which was measured with two items. For example: 'I intend to take an HIV-test within the next three months', measured on a seven-point scale (very surely not - very surely so). Measurement of intention took place before participation in one of the interventions (either experimental of control), and immediately thereafter.

2. Actual testing behaviour, which was measured three months after participation in one of the interventions (during the follow-up session)

All measures were self-reported.

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Attitude towards taking an HIV-test within the next three months was measured with four items. For example: "I consider taking an HIV-test within the next three months to be...", measured on a seven-point scale (very unwise - very wise)
2. Subjective social norm towards taking an HIV-test within the next three months was measured with two items. For example: "My best friends think that I should take an HIV-test within the next three months", measured on a seven-point scale (very surely not - very surely so)
3. Self-efficacy towards taking an HIV-test in the next three months was measured with eight items. For example: "I consider making an appointment to take an HIV-test at a testing location to be ", measured on a seven-point scale (very difficult - very easy)

All outcomes were self-reported measurements which took place before participation in one of the interventions (either experimental of control), and three months after participation in one of the interventions (during the follow-up session).

Completion date
14/02/2007

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Having had casual sex partners in the past six months
2. Not HIV-positive
3. Living in the Netherlands

Participant type(s)
Patient

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Adult

Sex
Male

Key exclusion criteria
1. Participants who did not complete all the questions on demographics
2. Living in the city of Nijmegen. For the purpose of another evaluation study, participants living in the city of Nijmegen were not randomly assigned to one of two intervention conditions, but always assigned to the experimental intervention.

Date of first enrolment
01/11/2006

Date of final enrolment
14/02/2007

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Netherlands

Study participating centre
Antomnie van leeuwenhoeklaan 9
Bilthoven
Netherlands
3721 MA

Sponsor information

Organisation
Maastricht University (UK)

ROR
https://ror.org/02jz4aj89

Funder(s)

Funder type
University/education

Funder Name
Maastricht University (Netherlands)

Alternative Name(s)
Maastricht University, UM

Funding Body Type
Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Universities (academic only)

Location
Netherlands

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary
Not provided at time of registration

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Other publications		08/07/2008		Yes	No