

THE BOTTOM LINE

GAY MEN, HPV &
ANAL CANCER



Australian Federation
of AIDS Organisations

BACKGROUND:

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted infection and the cause of a range of cancers, including cancers of the cervix, vulva, anus, penis, neck and throat. Men who have sex with men (MSM), and particularly HIV-positive MSM, are at significantly increased risk of developing HPV-related anal cancer, compared to the general population. There is still much to be learnt about anal cancer, and there are several areas that need to be addressed in order to improve prevention and treatment (including improved access to vaccination and testing services). However, it is important that these men are aware of the issues and learn what they can do now.



METHODS:

The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) developed a health promotion campaign to inform gay men and other MSM about HPV and the diseases it can cause, specifically anal cancer. 'The Bottom Line' campaign provides information on prevention (including vaccinations) and screening options for anal cancer. It also provides information, including personal stories, on treatment and management for men who have been diagnosed with anal cancer.

RESULTS:

The campaign is being implemented nationally by AFAO through its state and territory member organisations and other community-based HIV agencies, and has also utilised national and state-based cancer organisations for its promotion. The campaign has been promoted to clinicians, particularly to HIV specialists, as one of the tools to raise their awareness of both the issue of anal cancer amongst MSM and the screening options and training requirements.

CONCLUSION:

The development and implementation of this campaign demonstrates the benefits of strategically engaging and collaborating with other areas of the health sector to address emerging health issues such as anal cancer.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The website and campaign was developed by AFAO with the support of an unrestricted educational grant from bioCSL. Complete content and design control remained with AFAO, with no input from bioCSL.

