

TESTING THE 'NEVER TESTED'

PROVIDING HIV TESTS TO MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN AT A SYDNEY SEX-ON-PREMISES-VENUE

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FREE HIV TESTS

(TESTING FOR SYPHILIS, GONORRHOEA AND CHLAMYDIA ALSO AVAILABLE)

**AVAILABLE HERE ON LEVEL 4
FRIDAY 12PM - 3PM**

THIS IS A 357 - SYDNEY SEXUAL HEALTH CENTRE INITIATIVE



Introduction

The NSW HIV Strategy 2012-2015 sets ambitious targets to increase HIV testing among gay and other men who have sex with men (MSM).

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District has been working with community partners to increase community based HIV testing.

357 Sydney City Steam (357) is a busy sex-on-premises-venues (SOPV) in Sydney with anecdotally reported large numbers of non-gay identifying men and men from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

In order to access this difficult to reach population an existing self-testing service, managed by Sydney Sexual Health Centre, was enhanced with the aim of reaching men who had never tested for HIV or test less frequently than Australian guidelines recommend. The existing service is unstaffed and patrons can test for chlamydia and gonorrhoea any time the venue is open.

Testers complete a computer assisted self-interview which collects risk and demographic details and they then perform self-collected throat and anal swabs and urine sample.

Aim

To reduce undiagnosed HIV/STI infection through testing 357 patrons; targeting men who are not accessing current models.

Method

We compared the demographics, risk factors and past HIV testing history of:

- tested versus untested men
- Men reporting bisexual versus non-bisexual sex in the last 12 months
- all men who tested between 3/12/2014 & 31/05/2015

chi² or Fisher exact tests and Ranksum tests were used.

In December 2014, the pre-existing self-testing service was enhanced with the addition of nurse led serological screening for 2 three hour sessions each week.

357 attendees were made aware of the service through posters, a public address system and staff approaching men and offering testing.

Assistance and health education were provided by peer educators.

Men receive their results via SMS or email. HIV results were delivered the following day with other tests available within 7 days.

Results

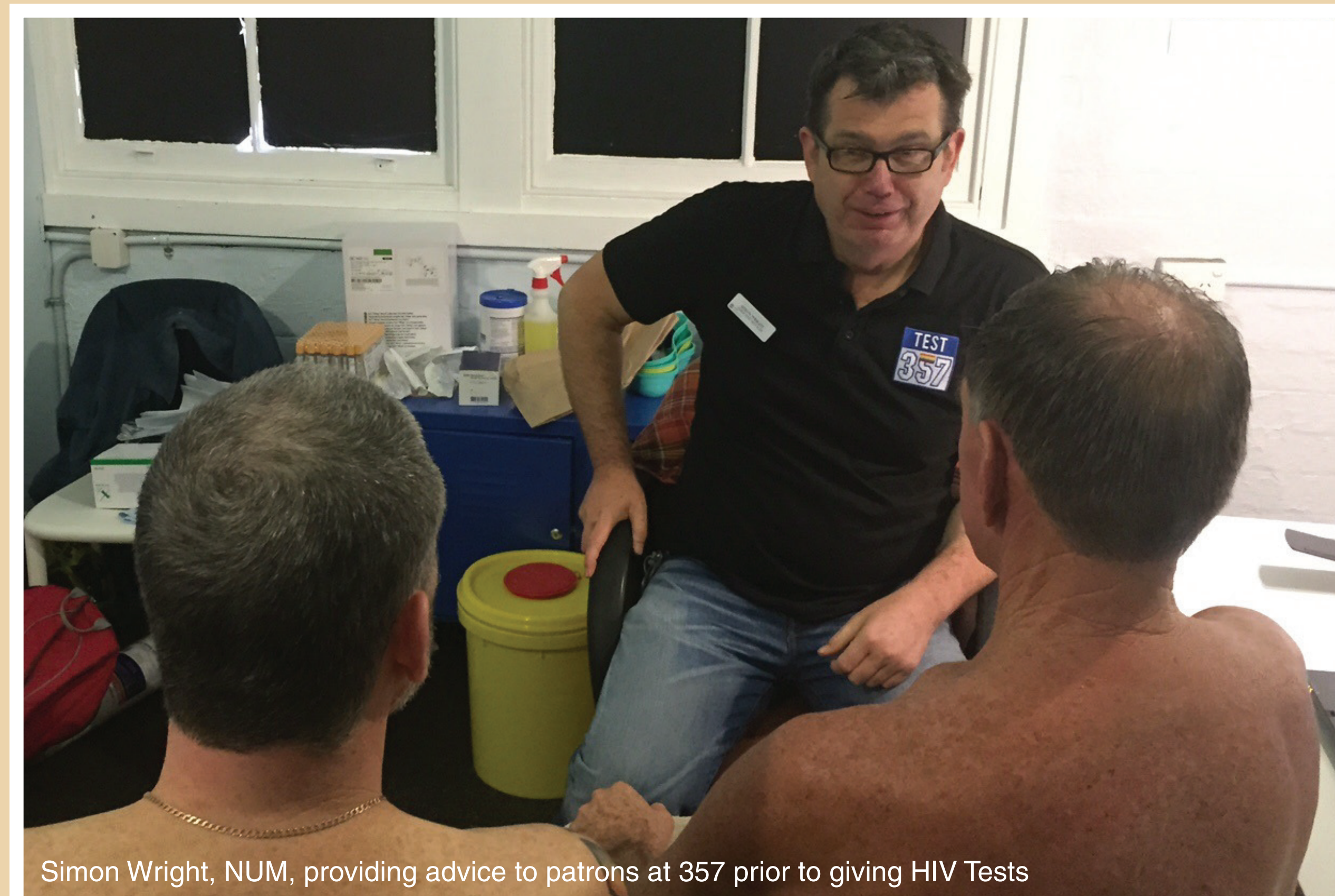
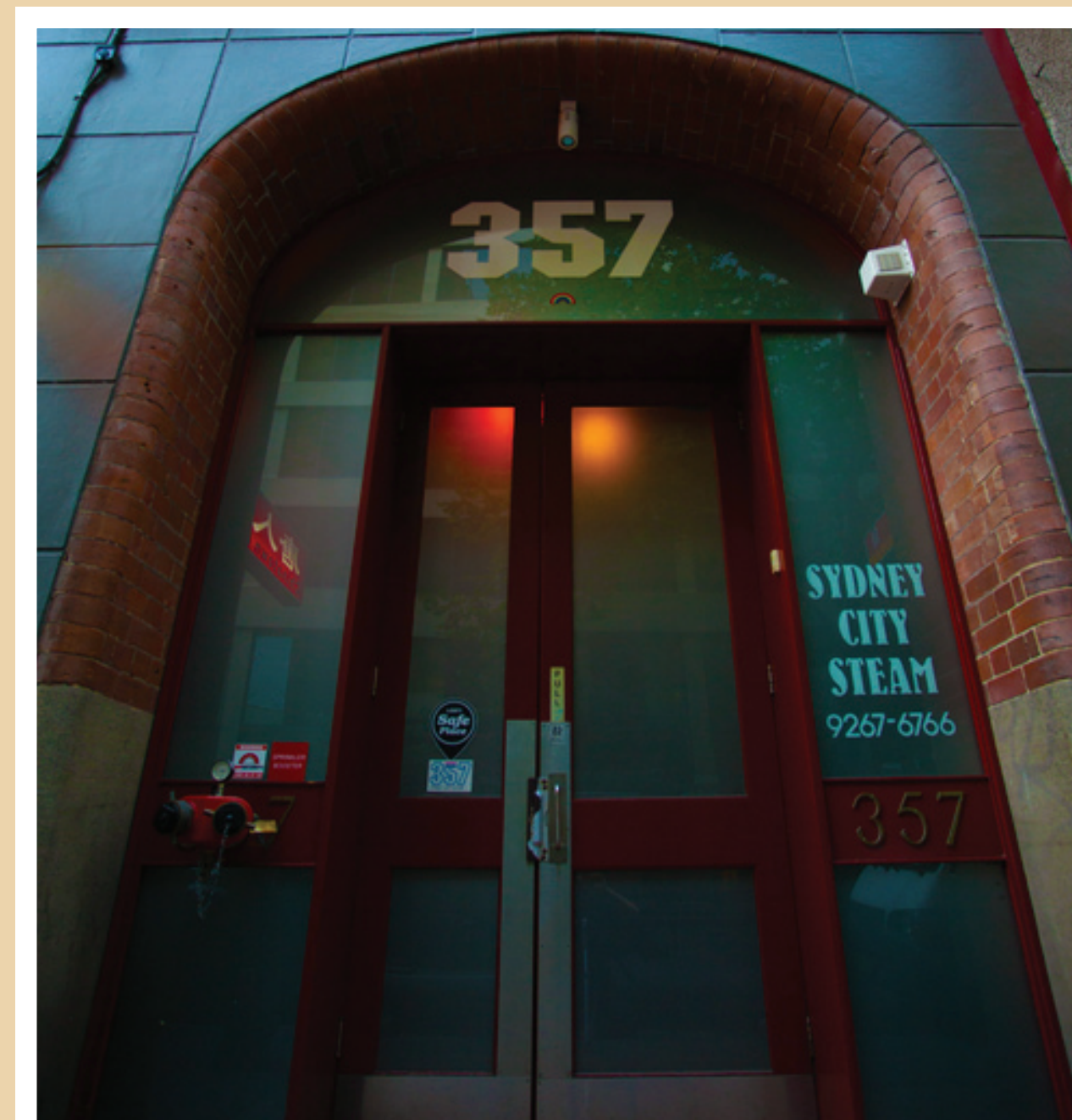
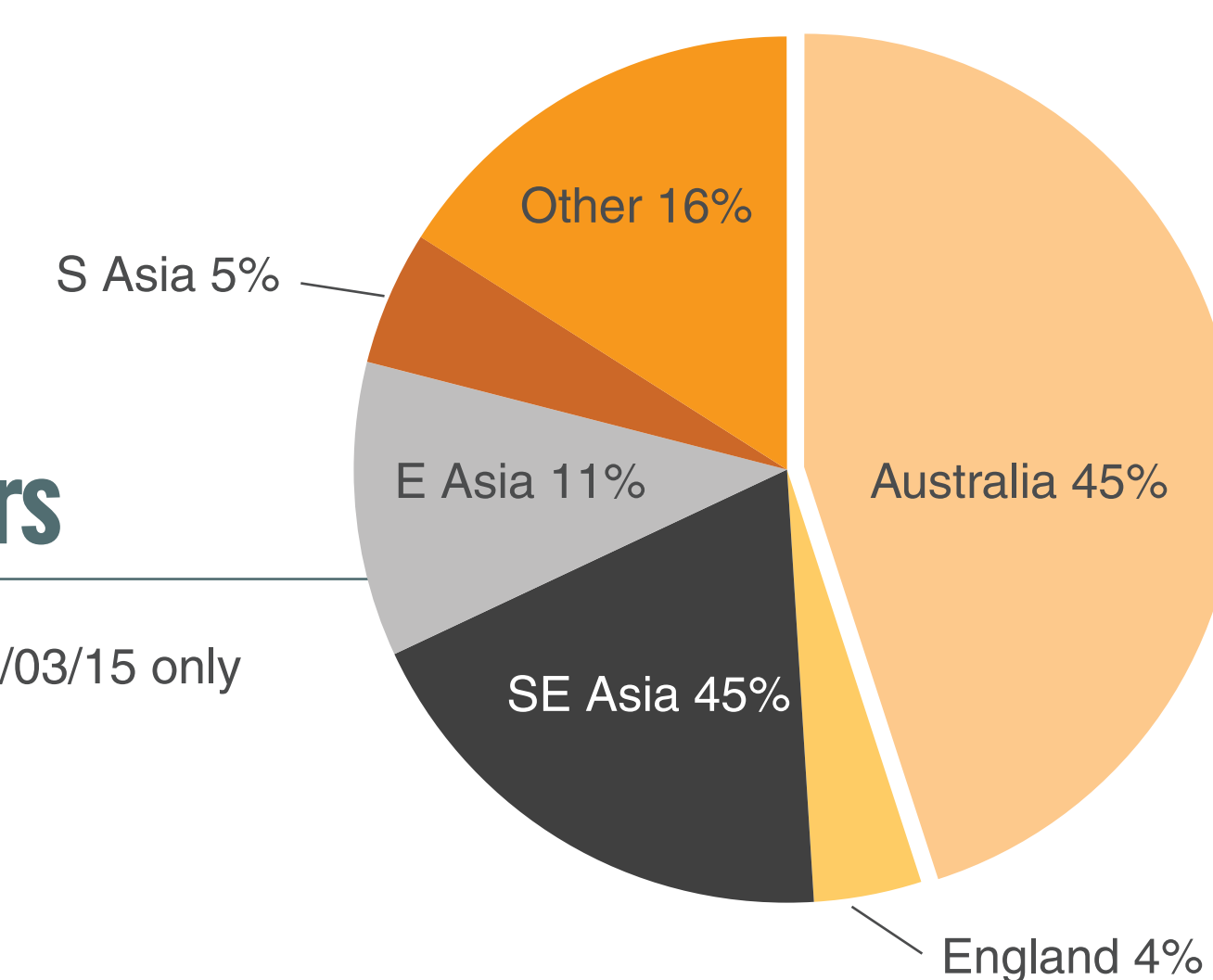
- 178 men had 186 testing visits during 38 individual clinics
- Average of 4.89 men per clinic or 1.63 men per testing hour
- The most clients seen at a single clinical session was 13
- 23% (41) reported no previous HIV testing
- 42% (58) of those previously tested reported not testing in the previous 12 months
- The median age was 49 (IQR 36.6-58.8)
- One new diagnosis of HIV were made
- The prevalence of STI in the population screened was 14% (26)
- 38% (44) of testers were born in an Asian country
- Engagement in health education with a population who may not be community connected was a major outcome.
- No statistical difference between tested and untested men*
- No statistical difference between bisexual and non-bisexual men

* age, country of birth, local health district residence, IDU history, Aboriginality, language spoken at home condom use in the last 3 months or partner numbers (data not shown).

Nationality of 357 Testers

* Nationality of testers from 3/12/14 to 16/03/15 only

| Condom Use in last 3/12 for anal intercourse | All partners (n=186) | Regular Partner (n=145) | Casual partners (n=145) |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| No Sex | 10 (5%) | 17 (12%) | 15 (10%) |
| No Condoms | 8 (4%) | 9 (6%) | 5 (3%) |
| Sometimes (<50%) | 9 (5%) | 9 (6%) | 7 (5%) |
| usually (>50%) | 48 (26%) | 34 (23%) | 32 (22%) |
| Always | 111 (60%) | 76 (52%) | 86 (59%) |



Simon Wright, NUM, providing advice to patrons at 357 prior to giving HIV Tests

Conclusion

- This SOPV testing program reached untested and less frequently tested MSM.
- The positivity rate for HIV & STI is comparable with other clinical and community based services in Sydney.

Acknowledgements

- Owners, Management and Staff at 357 Sydney City Steam
- ACON Outreach Volunteers