BACKGROUND

- In Peru, HIV primarily affects men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender women, and over 70% of the people living with HIV do not know their HIV status.
- HIV self-testing, which may be the first option for first-time testers by giving them the opportunity to test conveniently and privately in their homes.
- Some studies reported advantages people recognized about the oral self-test included being non-invasive, not needed to be trained to do it and being less painful and uncomfortable.

METHODS

- We evaluated the availability and potential use of HIV self-test kits in Peruvian pharmacies, also attitudes and intentions towards the HIV self-test of people at high-risk for HIV infection.
- Four pharmacy chains in Peru that were identified on www.orasick.com.pe as having the HIV self-test kit were surveyed to confirm availability.
- We asked questions to the manager in each chain of pharmacies about cost, purchase frequency and any restrictions for the purchase of the self-test kit.
- As part of an ongoing study we surveyed high-risk MSM and transgender women who attended either of two STI clinics, Barton and Epicenter, both located in Lima, Peru from June 2013 to May 2014.
- Data on demographics and willingness to use the HIV self-test kit were collected using an interviewer administered computer-based questionnaire.

RESULTS

- Our survey revealed that transgender women were more likely to report intentions of using the oral HIV self-test test compared to MSM (100% vs. 82%, p-value 0.015).
- Participants reported:
  - Willingness to perform the self-test an average of 4 times per year.
  - Willingness to pay an average of 3-7 USD for the test kits.
  - 87% (n=117) reported being comfortable getting HIV self-test kit in a clinic or by mail.
- Transgender women preferred to get the self-test kit at home and MSM preferred to get the self-test kit delivered at a friend’s house (Table 1).
- Among the four pharmacy chains surveyed, the average self-test kit cost was 17.72 USD. Self-test kits were available to individuals 18 years old for over-the-counter purchase.
- The test kit available was a self-test kit for physician use not intended for individual sale. The HIV self-test kit did not come with user instructions.
- The self-test kit included a swab, a test tube, a test tube rack and an HIV information sheet in English and Spanish.

Table 2: Men who have sex with men and transgender women willingness in using and receiving an HIV self-test kit by mail in Lima, Peru

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transgender Women</th>
<th>Men who have sex with men</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(n=22)</td>
<td>(n=68)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 (100%)</td>
<td>54 (82%)</td>
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If the HIV self-test were available for free through the mail or in an NGO, how many times a year would you perform this HIV test?

- Reported willingness to use the self-test:
  - Always (n=22, 100%)
  - Most always in a clinic (n=32, 80%)
  - Sometimes in a clinic (n=5, 24%)
  - Never (n=4, 18%)

If both services were available, how would you prefer to use a self-test HIV test by mail or in a clinic?

- Always in a clinic (n=16, 47%)
- Most always in a clinic (n=15, 42%)
- Sometimes in a clinic (n=4, 12%)
- Never in a clinic (n=3, 9%)

How comfortable would you feel by getting an HIV self-test kit delivered by a delivery company?

- Very comfortable (n=4, 12%)
- Somewhat comfortable (n=9, 32%)
- Neutral (n=4, 12%)
- Somewhat uncomfortable (n=4, 12%)
- Very uncomfortable (n=2, 6%)
- Don’t know (n=1, 4%)

Table 1: Participant Socio-demographics

<table>
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<tr>
<th>MSM (n=109, 79%)</th>
<th>Trans (n=33, 26%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (mean sd)</td>
<td>34.1 (10.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Had post-secondary education</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reported a previous HIV test</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Had condomless anal sex (last 3 months)</td>
<td>44%</td>
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FIGURE 1: Average of how much money participants were willing to pay for the self-test kit

- 3-7 USD: 94%
- 8-13 USD: 97%
- 16 USD: 7%
- 26-29 USD: 0%

DISCUSSION

- The Oraquick® in home HIV test kit was not available for purchase in Peru; instead the available test was the physician version that comes with no user instructions, not intended for individual self or home use.
- The average cost of this self-test kit version was 18 USD.
- Respondents reported willingness to pay 3-7 USD for the test, less than half the current price.
- Transgender women were willing to use oral HIV self-test instead of the regular blood test performed in a clinic as compared to MSM.
- Findings are consistent with other studies reporting the overall acceptability and preferences of self-testing.
- The principal barrier is the cost of the test, this would need to be changed for people to use it.

CONTACT & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Table 2: Men who have sex with men and transgender women willingness in using and receiving an HIV self-test kit by mail in Lima, Peru