

REAL MEN ARE SAFE (REMAS)

Good Evidence – Risk Reduction

INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION

Target Population

- Sexually active men in drug treatment

Goals of Intervention

- Reduce unprotected vaginal and anal sexual intercourse occasions

Brief Description

The *Real Men Are Safe* (REMAS) intervention is a workshop of 5 group sessions (90 min each, 3 to 8 men per group). Lectures, role-plays, peer group discussions and motivational self-assessment exercises are conducted with almost equal focus on information delivery and skill building and a lesser focus on motivation. Intervention materials are appropriate for men who have sex exclusively with women, as well as men who have sex with men. Topics include HIV/AIDS information, HIV risky behaviors (both sexual and injection practices), condom demonstration, identifying triggers, risk reduction problem solving, enhancing sex without drugs, and responsibility and communication in sexual relationships.

Theoretical Basis

- Information-Motivation-Behavioral Change (IMB) Model

Intervention Duration

- Five 90-minute group sessions

Intervention Setting

- Methadone clinics, psychosocial outpatient clinics

Deliverer

- Male counselors

Delivery Methods

- Counseling
- Demonstration
- Discussion
- Exercises
- Lecture
- Practice
- Role play

INTERVENTION PACKAGE INFORMATION

The intervention package and training are available through [Sociometrics](#) under the name [Real Men Are Safe](#).

This intervention is also available as a download from [Clinical Trails Network Dissemination Library](#) at [REMAS](#).

EVALUATION STUDY AND RESULTS

The original evaluation was conducted in Hartford, CT; New York, NY; Philadelphia, PA; Raleigh, NC; Seattle, WA; San Francisco, CA; Norwalk, CT; Huntington, WV; High Point, NC; Columbia, SC; Toledo, OH; Santa Fe, NM; and Rancho Cucamonga, CA between 2004 and 2006.

Key Intervention Effects

- Reduced unprotected sex

Study Sample

The analytic study sample of 417 men is characterized by the following:

- 56% white, 28% black or African American, 13% Hispanic/Latino, 2% American Indian, 1% Asian, 1% other
- 100% male (% MSM not reported)
- Mean age of 40 years
- Mean education of 12.2 years

Recruitment Settings

Methadone clinics and psychosocial outpatient clinics

Eligibility Criteria

Men were eligible if they were at least 18 years of age, currently in methadone treatment for 30 days or more at a participating clinic, engaging in unprotected vaginal or anal intercourse during the past 6 months (with women or men or both), able to speak and understand English, free of observable gross mental status impairment, and did not have a primary sexual partner intending to get pregnant during the study period.

Assignment Method

Cohorts of 3 to 8 men (N = 590 men) were randomly assigned to 1 of 2 groups: REMAS intervention (n = 291) or HIV Education comparison (n = 299).

Comparison Group

The HIV Education comparison group received 1 session (60 minutes) that represented a standardized treatment-as-usual intervention. It covered only the information component of the IMB Model and consisted of selected educational material from the first 2 sessions of the REMAS intervention, including HIV/AIDS

definitions, transmission, testing and counseling, treatment, and prevention. Counselors delivered this session using flip charts and informational and resource hand out materials.

Relevant Outcomes Measured and Follow-up Time

- Sex behaviors (including frequency of unprotected vaginal and anal sexual occasions by partner type during the last 90 days and condom use by partner type) were measured at 3 and 6 months post-intervention.

Participant Retention

- Intervention
 - 75% retained at 3 months
 - 65% retained at 6 months
- Control
 - 75% retained at 3 months
 - 70% retained at 6 months

Significant Findings

- Intervention participants reported significantly fewer unprotected sexual occasions in past 90 days than comparison participants at 3-month ($p < .001$) and 6-month follow-ups ($p < .001$).
- In subset analyses, intervention participants who attended at least 3 REMAS intervention sessions (completers) reported significantly fewer unprotected sexual occasions with any partner at 3-month ($p < .0001$) and 6-month follow-ups ($p < .0001$) than participants who attended the single HIV Education session.
- Additional significant intervention effects among completers were reported for the following outcomes: unprotected sexual occasions with regular partners at 3-month follow-up ($p < .0001$) and 6-month follow-up ($p < .0001$); unprotected sexual occasions with casual partners at 3-month follow-up ($p < .0002$).

Considerations

- This intervention fails to meet the best-evidence criteria due to the fact that cohorts of 3-8 men were allocated to treatment groups, but analyses were at the individual level without analytic adjustment.

REFERENCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Calsyn, D. A., Hatch-Maillette, M., Tross, S., Doyle, S. R., Crits-Christoph, P., Song, Y. S., . . . Berns, S. B. (2009). [Motivational and skills training HIV/sexually transmitted infection sexual risk reduction groups for men.](#) *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 37, 138-150.

Lead researcher for *Real Men are Safe (REMAS)*, **Dr. Donald A. Calsyn** passed away on February 3, 2013.

At this time there is no contact information for this intervention.

