

AFRO e-newsletter (January 2011)

1 WORK REPORT

1.1 January Tea Gathering: Astonishing misunderstandings: How do sex workers understand safe sex? (26 Jan)

It is believed that most of the sex workers have had the following doubts but do not really know the answers: Can oral sex transmit STDs? How could I still get infected in spite of using a condom? I look so healthy. Does it mean I am not infected?



Therefore, AFRO has invited Dr. Fong from our clinic, to give a brief clarification on those misunderstandings of safe sex, and concluded as follows:

1. Most of the STDs can be transmitted through body fluid, mucus and blood. Apart from vaginal sex, other sexual activities such as oral sex, anal sex, swallowing of sperms and ejaculating on the face, could transmit STDs as well.
2. Advertisements claim the mouth wash can kill 99.9% germs. In fact, it cannot kill the STDs bacteria /virus and fungus, and thus mouth wash cannot prevent STDs.
3. Most of the STIs have no obvious symptoms. Even if there is no feeling of unwellness or the client looks decent, it cannot tell whether he or she is infected.
4. Having sex during menstruation or “safe period” without a condom, taking emergency contraceptive pills or applying intra-uterine contraceptive devices may only prevent pregnancy, but not the STDs.
5. Regardless of the thickness or flavour, put on a quality guaranteed condom, and use a new condom in between anal sex, oral sex and vaginal sex, which can block most of the STDs bacteria / virus.

6. Vaginal irrigation could possibly wash away the good bacteria that protect the vagina. It may bring in the colon bacillus or bacteria around the anus to the urethra which may result in inflammation. Therefore, frequent vaginal irrigation is not suggested. Moreover, Dettol disinfectant is too strong for the cleansing of the vaginal.

We hope sex workers can gain more understandings on practicing safe sex after this gathering, and be healthy!

1.2 Community Stakeholders' Consultation Meeting for the Development of Recommended HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong 2012-2016

2 AFRO staff members and 2 peer educators attended the Session for Female Sex Workers (26 Jan) of the Community Stakeholders' Consultation Meeting for the Development of Recommended HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong 2012-2016, and shared their views on the current needs of the community, the vision of the next five years, the strategies that need to be continued and need to be in place.

The participants came up with 11 recommendations and set the priorities, including: improve the service of Social Hygiene Clinic and reform its charging policy; utilize multi-media for positive, open and popular HIV/AIDS education; eliminate discrimination and stigmatization, initiate cross-bureau/department cooperation; decriminalize sex work; stop using condoms as evidence to arrest and prosecute sex workers.

2 FUTURE WORK

2.1 February - BBQ gathering for the Chinese New Year

Year of Rabbit is coming soon! This year we will have an outdoor celebration, and enjoy some barbecue fun!

Date: 19 Feb 2011 (Saturday)

Time: 10 am - 5 pm

Venue: Tai Tong Lychee Valley (Assemble at the park on Hamilton Street, Yau Ma Tei)

Fare: \$70 (Same price for all, which includes the transportation fee and 3 hours BBQ buffet)

For enquires or seat reservations, please contact us at 2770 1002.

3 AFRO'S NEWS READING

Booming sex trade begins to diversify

<http://www.thelocal.de/society/20110111-32351.html>

11 Jan 2011

With prostitution legal in Germany since 2002, the country's sex trade is moving towards greater specialisation, with niches including companionship for the elderly and disabled, a sex worker group said on Tuesday.

There are some 150,000 registered prostitutes in Germany , with another 250,000 estimated to work off the books, according to daily Der Tagesspiegel.

Though sex workers pay taxes and are entitled to public health insurance and other benefits, their profession remains stigmatised, Stephanie Klee, spokeswoman for the BSD sex worker advocacy group, told the paper.

But Klee, who has worked for some 25 years as a prostitute, said she is cautiously optimistic about the future of the branch.

“Sex work is slowly becoming more similar to other professions,” she told the paper.

Red light district jobs are becoming as specialised as those in other fields, she said.

While some prostitution has become concentrated in large high-end “wellness” brothels such as Berlin’s Charlottenburg district Artemis, which boasts a pool, sauna and buffet other establishments are focusing on the controversial practice of “flat-rate” prices.

Still other prostitutes, such as Klee herself, focus on providing sex for seniors in retirement homes or for the disabled” an area the BSD spokeswoman said she expects to grow swiftly as Germany 's population ages.

One director of a Berlin retirement home told the paper she would like to create a “room for intimate encounters,” but is still in discussions with the religious organisation behind the operation.

Even large brothels such as Artemis have recognised this potential, making their facilities barrier-free.

“It is important for us to show that Artemis is outfitted for the disabled” the company said, touting wheelchair friendly changing rooms and showers, in addition to helpful personnel.

And while such companionship isn’t covered by public health insurers, the terminology, Sexualassistentz, or “sexual assistance” is already well-known in bureaucratic “insurance German,” the paper said.

Comment:

Sex work is recognised as work in Germany, the industry is thus diversifying its services to meet different needs, which makes it no different from other industries and professions.

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