

Vulnerable and Invisible: Homosexually Active Sri Lanka Men and HIV/AIDS.

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Sri Lanka is considered a low -prevalence country for HIV/AIDS. In 2002, the World Bank-supported national HIV prevention initiative began and with it a review of HIV prevention strategies and those persons vulnerable to the virus. While previous prevention and control efforts have remained primarily in the domain of the Ministry of Health and a small number of non-government organisations, the current national HIV prevention project has called for a multi-sectoral response to HIV/AIDS. The initial National Strategic Plan for Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS supports the push for a broader, more integrated response to the epidemic in Sri Lanka. The Plan also identifies men who have sex with men (MSM) as one of “the most vulnerable population groups to HIV infection.” Given the illegality of and social stigma associated with homosexual relations in Sri Lanka, how might organisations attempt to target MSM for HIV prevention and what do Sri Lankan MSM’s thinking about HIV/AIDS? This paper will present some initial findings from a series of interviews with MSM and local health/community workers. It will explore organisations’ capacities to work with MSM and MSM’s experience of HIV/AIDS.

Key Words: Vulnerable; Invisible; Sri Lankan Homosexually; HIV/AIDS

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