

**Project Title:****Behavioral surveillance surveys of the male clients of female sex workers population in Hong Kong (Project Code: MSS 190R)****Executive Summary:****Objectives**

This behavioral surveillance surveys (BSS) study for the male clients of female sex workers (MCFSW) population in Hong Kong investigated trends in context and level of risk behaviors.

**Design**

Three comparable annual serial anonymous cross-sectional population-based telephone surveys were conducted in 2011 (n=2,002), 2012 (n=2,009) and 2013 (n=2,104), with response rates ranging from 53.2% to 60.7%.

**Setting**

It is a population-based surveillance study with random telephone numbers selected from up-to-date Hong Kong telephone directories.

**Participants**

Hong Kong Chinese males of age 18 to 60 years were interviewed; those who had had sex with a female sex worker (FSW) in the last six months were defined as a MCFSW (n=124, 138 and 114 respectively).

**Procedures**

With verbal informed consent, non-sensitive questions were asked by an interviewer in Part I; participants were then transferred to an automated validated computerized system through which MCFSW answered pre-recorded HIV-related questions by keying in their responses.

### **Main outcome measures**

Key surveillance indicators obtained from MCFSW included: 1) HIV-related knowledge and perceptions (e.g. risk perception and perceived efficacy of condom use), 2) geographic location of commercial sex (e.g. HK or mainland), 3) unprotected sex with FSW (last six months), and 4) HIV antibody testing (last six months).

### **Results**

Prevalence of MCFSW was 6.2%, 6.9% and 5.4% in the three rounds of surveys, respectively. Fewer MCFSW had visited FSW in mainland China in 2013 than in the previous two years (46.0%, 49.3%, and 31.8%, respectively). Other trends are summarized in Table 1. 1) There were slight improvements in HIV-related knowledge and prevalence of HIV antibody testing (10%, 15.2% and 16.8%) but such prevalence remained low; 2) There was no improvement in prevalence of consistent condom use with FSW; and 3) There were apparent deteriorations in perceived risk of HIV infection and efficacy of condom use.

**Table 1 BSS for MCFSW from 2011 to 2013**

		<b><u>2011</u></b> (%)	<b><u>2012</u></b> (%)	<b><u>2013</u></b> (%)
<b>Mentioned 3 correct modes of HIV transmission</b>	Yes	21.0	19.6	24.6
<b>Perceived efficacy of condom use for HIV prevention</b>	High / very high efficacy	79.8	73.9	71.1
<b>Perceived chance of contracting HIV in the future</b>	Some chances or more	35.0	42.0	31.8
<b>Consistent condom use during commercial sex#</b>	Yes	75.0	76.1	74.5

# last 6 months

## **Conclusions**

Despite presence of related interventions, the tracking of the key BSS indicators showed little or no improvement and even some regression in HIV-related perceptions, suggesting existing interventions being ineffective. The risk of HIV transmission is still sizable and hence MCFSW remains a high risk group and effective interventions are still greatly warranted. Fewer MCFSW are visiting FSW in mainland China, possibly due to higher cost; it is important to observe future trends as major police actions were launched in 2014.