

The AIDS Quiz – An Instrument For Self-assessment Of Protective Behavior.

Project No. 93-7174 of the National AIDS Research Programme

Project Team:

Kopp Christine, Schoep M, Niklowitz M, Lang S, Gaberell H, Eich D, von Overbeck J.

Objective:

New HIV infections in Switzerland are increasingly happening outside the traditional risk groups. The adequate perception of risk situations in a general public not necessarily viewing itself at risk is a major precondition to protective behavior. The AIDS QUIZ was therefore designed as an instrument to self-evaluate protective behavior and to screen for problems related to it. To the knowledge of the authors, no similar instrument has so far been developed in the field of HIV prevention.

Methods:

The characteristics of the study population (n=5503) in the main testing round were: 57.3% women, 42.7% men, medium age 30.1 years, 93.9% heterosexual, 3.9% homosexual, 2.2% bisexual, 71.1% living in a partnership, whereof 27.1% below one year duration. The average percentage of "yes" answers is 14.2%, the mean score is 3.8 "yes" answers. The most important reasons against safer sex in our study population was perceived intimacy to a partner. The evaluation allowed to draw a profile of persons with high scores: they tend to live in a new partnership, be male, between 21-30 years of age, bisexual, and use the quiz at the anonymous HIV testing sites. The comparison of the self-rating in the quiz with the external rating by the councilors showed that a higher score as well as a higher number of different subjects contributing to the score correlate with a higher risk rating by the councilor.

Discussion:

The evaluation of the AIDS QUIZ has shown that it provides an adequate basis for self-evaluation of protective behavior by serving as a "facilitator". The iterative development and continuous adaptations proved to be an efficient method to ascertain comprehensibility. Experience with the quiz showed that it is generally both easy and attractive to use. The evaluation also gives a detailed study on reasons against protective behavior in a big sample of a mixed population, allowing further suggestions for prevention. A broad application of the AIDS QUIZ on public events, in the printed media and prior to counseling at the testing centers and at the doctors' practice is aimed for.