



Address: 5/F, Shaukeiwan Jockey Club Clinic, 8 Chai Wan Road, Hong Kong  
Tel: (852) 2560 8528 Fax: 852) 2560 4154  
Website: <http://www.aids.org.hk/> Email: [hkaf@hkaf.com](mailto:hkaf@hkaf.com)

From: Hong Kong AIDS Foundation, released by Media Power Network Ltd

Date: 18 Oct 2017

---

**Press Release (Immediate)  
Hong Kong AIDS Foundation**

**Preliminary preparation and follow-up service need to be considered before launching  
“HIV self-test at home”**

The Recommended HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong (2017-2021), which had been launched earlier by the Government, expressed its intention to implement the "HIV self-test (home test)". In view of this, the Hong Kong AIDS Foundation (hereafter "HKAF") has conducted an online survey on the "HIV home test" from April to August 2017, in order to explore public's intention towards the plan. HKAF held a Press Conference today to make further suggestions on the preliminary preparation and follow-up of the test.

**Advisory before launch**

A total of 511 replies were received from the online survey, aged between 20 and 39 years (82%), with 36% male and 64% female, while about 63% (324) of respondents were using English as medium of communication. Nearly 90% of people showed their interests but privacy is one of their concerns. Top concerns included the need of disclosure to others about the reasons for HIV testing and who will know the test results. HKAF emphasized that all the tests carried out by the organization, no matter the contents of the conversation and test results, are absolutely confidential.

**Role of service agent (Preliminary and follow-up)**

Dr Wilson Lam, Specialist in Infectious Disease, stated that the number of HIV/AIDS infection cases in HK has keep rising each year while some of them have not made a definite diagnosis. Dr Lam believed the launch of home-test can encourage more citizens in conducting HIV testing and caring about their body health. However, the **implementation of home-test should work well with professional counselling and supportive services to ensure psychological and physiological health of test takers**. HKAF suggests the Department of Health conducting meetings and inquiries with stakeholders and explaining detailed service procedures such as the home test kit distribution point, the possibility of forming a consulting team (include psychologist and non- Government organizations as members etc.) as well as all pre and post psychological services



Address: 5/F, Shaukeiwan Jockey Club Clinic, 8 Chai Wan Road, Hong Kong  
Tel: (852) 2560 8528 Fax: 852) 2560 4154  
Website: <http://www.aids.org.hk/> Email: [hkaf@hkaf.com](mailto:hkaf@hkaf.com)

followed up by professionals etc. HKAF also suggests conducting a public consultation before launching the plan because AIDS and public health are closely related.

Dr Carole Li, a Registered Clinical Psychologist, mentioned that HIV/AIDS is not an ordinary cold, but in general public there are still prejudice and discrimination and could cause death. Once the test results are positive, there may be a "**crisis reaction**". They will **feel desperate, worried, and apologetic or even generated a fierce reaction and behavior**. It happened even accompanied by the professional medical staff in the hospital, not to mention the home test alone. Their psychological situation needs to be taken into consideration. Dr Li also shared a foreign situation that **18-30% of HIV-infected people will experience mental and emotional illness**. Early attention to them helps in preventing trauma.

Therefore, HKAF proposes **requiring the public to collect their first Home-test Kit at HKAF or other relevant organizations so that they can have the opportunity to conduct the pre-psychological counselling, basic training and understand other follow-up services**. After that, the person can conduct regular test at home and contact the professionals once they have any concern. It is recommended that they go back to the service agent for an annual review check.

### **Non-Chinese needs matters**

Moreover, 63% replies were received from who is using English as medium of communication, including near 90% as female. Around 80% interested in "basic knowledge of AIDS" and "infection risk assessment", and more than 60% were interested in "support service after infected" and "counseling service". HKAF realized that the overall promotion and support to non-Chinese by the the Government is relatively inadequate in the past years. And therefore we have been beginning to provide different services with other non-Chinese service agencies to carry out preventive education and testing services since 2010, as well as to carry out services for ethnic minority women in order to alleviate the infection risk among their groups.

HKAF has always emphasized **AIDS is closely related to public health and the most appropriate support** services should be given to the people in need, regardless of their nationality, gender or sexual orientation. We wish to cooperate with the DH and conduct thorough consultation before implementing the scheme. To carry out targeted services and work with relevant organizations and meets the



Address: 5/F, Shaukeiwan Jockey Club Clinic, 8 Chai Wan Road, Hong Kong  
Tel: (852) 2560 8528 Fax: 852) 2560 4154  
Website: <http://www.aids.org.hk/> Email: [hkaf@hkaf.com](mailto:hkaf@hkaf.com)

needs of the public. The HKAF will keep educating the public and look forward to effectively curbing HIV / AIDS labeling and stigma, so that the infected person will be fairly treated by others.

- End -

#### About HONG KONG AIDS FOUNDATION

Hong Kong AIDS Foundation was established in 1991 and is a non-governmental social service organisation. The Foundation's mission is to limit the spread of HIV infection in the community. Throughout the years, the Foundation has been actively engaged in the promotion of AIDS education, the provision of services, and the nurturing of a harmonious and caring environment for those infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS.

#### Media enquiries

Please contact Ms. Cathy Ng, Marketing and Publicity Manager of the Hong Kong AIDS Foundation, at 2560 8528 / 61305611 or by email to [cathyng@hkaf.com](mailto:cathyng@hkaf.com); or Ms. May Lam at Media Power Network Ltd, at 3583 1665 / 9199 0641 or by email to [may@mediapower.hk](mailto:may@mediapower.hk)