

Notes from 12/6/05 CSVWG meeting at GMHC

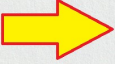
1. DOHMH Condom/Lube Initiative: George De Stefano told the group that DOHMH was instituting a new registration system for online ordering of condoms and lube. When the new system is in place, all organizations will have to register as new organizations, including those who already have been ordering. George will have administrative approval of all orders. When organizations complete the registration form, they will receive a new log-on ID to use for all subsequent orders. They will not have to re-enter any of the required information unless the info changes. George reiterated that commercial sex venues are an approved category for participating in the program. That includes private sex parties.


2. Bathhouse HIV Rapid Testing

George informed the group that none of the proposals submitted in response to the recent DOHMH RFP were for rapid testing in commercial sex venues. However, the DOHMH had solicited proposals for bathhouse testing before the RFP was issued and will now revisit those proposals and discuss them with the two organizations.

There also was discussion of testing at private CSVs. Walid of Thugs4Thugs said he was interested in such a program. He also noted that he recently started providing announcements over his PA system cautioning patrons about safer sex and that condoms and lube are available. He said most patrons welcomed these announcements. Some, however, were made uncomfortable by them, presumably because the announcements made them think about their own behavior. Walid also said the posters and other materials he received from GMHC's Gay Men's Institute were well received by his customers.

3. Popular Opinion Leader (POL) Training: George said he had not received names of candidates who might be interested in being trained as POLs. (Note: the training is available to all CSVWG members, including CSVs, CBO staff, and DOHMH staff.) If any members are interested, they should contact George.

 4. Recruiting more private party promoters: There was discussion of the need to bring more promoters into the group. However, there still is considerable skepticism and reluctance on the part of promoters regarding any involvement with DOH. Walid said even some CBO staff had told him that the City intended to raid private parties. George assured Walid and the group that this is just a rumor, and that the health department is not doing this and does not plan to. He noted that whereas in the past the Department had regarded CSVs as public health threats, there was a growing realization that they actually could be partners for public health activities, and that the existence of the CSVWG was evidence of that.

 Peter Laqueur raised the question: how do we reach CSVs that are "underground," and who won't provide e-mail addresses or other contact information? Brandon of Brandon's POZ Party said he hands out goodie bags to his patrons that include safer sex kits and organizational business cards, and that he'd be willing to include CSVWG material. He