



# COBATEST & COBA-Cohort Update Meeting

## ChemSex

**Euro HIV EDAT Meeting**  
Barcelona – May 15th, 2018

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# Background

- 1) ChemSex is an internationally growing behavior, especially in the **MSM community**.
- 2) ChemSex **problematic aspects** are associated with some factors which are also present in the history of people who inject drugs (PWID), i.e. HIV stigma, abuse, psychological difficulties.
- 3) ChemSex severe **consequences** could be Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), psychological problems, loss of work and social networking, addiction, toxicities.
- 4) In the Greek population, although there is evidence of the increasing appearance of ChemSex, there is relatively **little data**.
- 5) A careful intervention should be based on the particular circumstances of the Greek population, taking into account its needs.

# ChemSex Intervention

Collaboration between:

- 1) The Ath Checkpoint
- 2) The Department of Psychology of the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens
- 3) The 4th Pathology Clinic of Attikon University Hospital
- 4) The 1st Pathology Clinic of Laiko University Hospital

- **Research project**

- Objective: to investigate the demographic and epidemiological data of ChemSex in Greek population, with particular emphasis on MSM and people living with HIV (PLWH).





# CHECKPOINT

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prevention and testing centers



# Philosophy

## OBJECTIVES

- 1) HIV testing
- 2) Facilitation of early diagnosis and optimal access to treatment
- 3) Normalization of HIV testing
- 4) Using pre and post test counseling to promote a **modern** safer sex message through a confidential, candid, non-judgmental way
- 5) Battling stigma and discrimination in the MSM community by informing people of the **beneficial impact of early treatment** and of the **transmission reduction** benefit of antiretroviral treatment (TasP)

## TARGETS

- 1) Reduce the undiagnosed fraction
- 2) Reduce the number of **MSM** who have never been tested before

## LOGISTICS

- 1) Central, easily-accessible location and friendly, non-clinical environment
- 2) Convenient opening hours (Mo-Sa: 12-8 pm)
- 3) Scheduled appointments & drop-ins
- 4) Modern diagnostics (rapid testing)



# Activities



# ChemSex Intervention

Combination of **quantitative** and qualitative methodology:

- **Quantitative:** survey of beneficiaries of HIV Clinics, Checkpoint beneficiaries, student population and internet users.
- **Tools:**
  - 1) **World Health Organization Life Quality Questionnaire, WHOQOL-BREF.**
    - > Self-completed questionnaire on quality of life.
    - > Internationally approved tool, both suited for assessing the quality of life and for evaluating interventions aiming at it.
  - 2) **HIV Knowledge Questionnaire (HIV-KQ-45)** (Carey, Morrison-Beedy, & Johnson, 1997).
    - > Self-completed scale of knowledge about transmission and protection against HIV
  - 3) **ChemSex screening questionnaire**, based on international literature indicating dimensions to be explored. A reference point in its “construction” was the screening questionnaire of 56 Dean Street

# ChemSex Intervention

Combination of quantitative and **qualitative** methodology:

- **Qualitative:**

- > Conduct **focus groups** involving people experienced with ChemSex.

- > During the meetings, key dimensions of the phenomenon are explored, such as initial engagement, management of use, differentiation between problematic and non-problematic use, implications on oneself and relationships.

- > The groups are designed based on modern methodological models of the focus group.

- > There is an in-built quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the sessions and of the whole intervention.

- > Each round consists of 7 two-hour meetings with 5-8 participants and two moderators.

Thank you very much



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