

The COBATEST network: A platform to perform monitoring and evaluation of HIV community-based testing practices in Europe

Fernández-López L^{1,2}, Reyes-Urueña J¹, Agustí C^{1,2}, Klavs I³, Kustec T³, Casabona J^{1,2} and the COBATEST Network group.

¹Centre for Epidemiological Studies on HIV/STI in Catalonia (CEEISCAT), Agència de Salut Pública de Catalunya (ASPC), Badalona, Spain

²CIBER Epidemiología y Salud Pública (CIBERESP), Madrid, Spain

³National Institute of Public Health (NIJZ), Ljubljana, Slovenia

Objective:

The COBATEST network is a European network of Community-based Voluntary Counselling and Testing (CBVCT) centres, established in the framework of HIV-COBATEST project, which monitors and evaluates HIV testing activity. The objectives of the network are:

- 1) To use standardized questionnaires and procedures for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of CBVCT activity;
- 2) To evaluate the potential impact of CBVCTs in the improvement of HIV early diagnosis and access to treatment

Methods:

Currently, 40 CBVCTs of 18 European countries participate in the network. For M&E of CBVCT activities of the participating centres, a standardized protocol with core indicators was developed. CBVCT centres, members of the network, share common instruments for data collection and data entry. The network has a common database that allows global data analysis and comparisons between centres. Alternatively, those CBVCTs that do not use these common tools send aggregated data on core M&E indicators.

Results:

According to the preliminary analysis of data centers using common data entry tools (27 CBVCT centres from 7 different countries (Spain, Denmark, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine) for the year 2015, a total of 10,300 HIV tests have been performed in 9,102 individuals (Table 1) (45.4% men who have sex with men (MSM), 23.0% heterosexual men, 20.8% heterosexual women, 9.4% sex workers (SW), 1.2% people who inject drugs (PWID)). 31.9% of people tested were migrants and in 33.4% of cases, the clients were tested for the first time. A 1.9% of tests were reactive (2.6% MSM, 6.3% male SW, 0.2% female SW, 1.9% PWID, 2.3% migrants). Transgenders represents a 1.6% of clients tested, and a 10.3% had a reactive test result. 70% of the cases with a reactive result had a confirmatory test performed and 65.5% of the confirmed positive individuals were successfully linked to healthcare.

Table 1. Key performance indicators for 2015

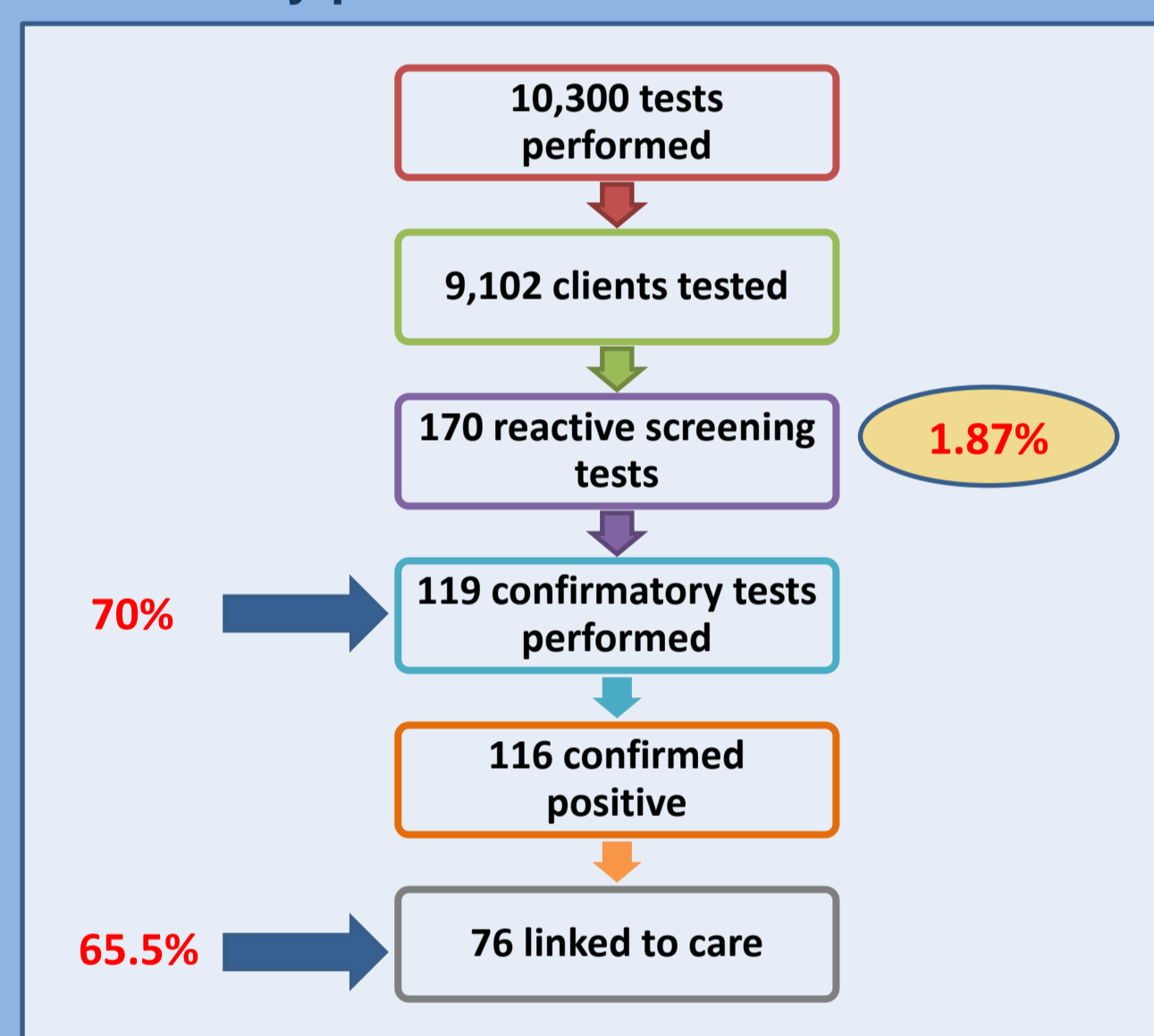


Figure 2. Percentage of reactive HIV screening tests stratified by sex, age group and key population

All clients	All	Males	Females	<25	>=25
% of clients with a reactive screening HIV test result	1,9%	2,4%	0,4%	1,2%	2,1%
Numerator	170	161	9	27	139
Denominator	9102	6748	2350	2324	6566

Key groups

MSM	All	Males	Females	<25	>=25
% of clients with a reactive screening HIV test result	2,6%	2,6%		2,3%	3,6%
Numerator	114	114		25	117
Denominator	4399	4399		1081	3234

IDU	All	Males	Females	<25	>=25
% of clients with a reactive screening HIV test result	1,9%	2,6%	0,0%	0,0%	2,2%
Numerator	2	2	0	0	2
Denominator	104	77	26	12	90

SW	All	Males	Females	<25	>=25
% of clients with a reactive screening HIV test result	3,0%	6,3%	0,2%	1,4%	3,3%
Numerator	26	25	1	2	23
Denominator	872	395	477	142	705

Migrants	All	Males	Females	<25	>=25
% of clients with a reactive screening HIV test result	2,3%	3,2%	0,7%	1,6%	2,6%
Numerator	65	58	7	10	53
Denominator	2794	1823	971	643	2077

Figura 1. Socio-demographic characteristics, risk behaviour and HIV testing information for people that have been tested

Clients tested for HIV		
	N	%
Age groups (N= 8,890)		
<20	792	8,9%
>=21-35	5301	59,6%
>=36-50	2250	25,3%
>50	547	6,2%
Gender (N=9,098)		
Male	6603	72,6%
Female	2350	25,8%
Transgender	145	1,6%
Migrants (N= 8,745)		
yes	2794	31,9%
Risk Groups (N= 8,925)		
UDI	104	1,2%
Male sex worker	391	4,4%
MSM	4055	45,4%
Women sex worker	464	5,2%
Heterosexual women	1857	20,8%
Heterosexual men	2054	23,0%
Type of test used (N=9,095)		
Rapid blood test	7114	78,2%
Rapid oral test	1871	20,6%
Conventional test	110	1,2%
Testing sites (N=9,102)		
CBVCT office	8083	88,8%
Outdoors/Van	61	0,7%
Sex work venue	87	1,0%
Sauna/sex venue	146	1,6%
Public venue	187	2,1%
Amusement venue	355	3,9%
Needle exchange venue	31	0,3%
Other	152	1,7%
Previous HIV test (N=8,970)		
yes	5872	65,5%
no	3098	34,5%

Conclusions:

The COBATEST network contributes to standardize information about the activity, procedures and results of CBVCT centres in Europe. This information and standardized tools can help improve these services and inform the responsible politicians to better integrate these interventions within their national HIV prevention and control programs.

COBATEST network: AIDS Fondet* (Denmark), Fondazione LILA Milano* (Italy), Demetra* (Lithuania), AVACOS*, CAS Gibraltar*, OMSIDA* (Spain), StopSida* (Spain), Àmbit Prevenció* (Spain), Gais Positius* (Spain), SAPS-Creu Roja* (Spain), Centre Jove d'Anticoncepció i Sexualitat* (CJAS) (Spain), Creu Roja Tarragona* (Spain), Actuavallès* (Spain), ACASC* (Spain), Associació Antisida de Lleida* (Spain), Assessoria Tgn* (Spain), ACCAS* (Spain), Baltic HIV Association* (Latvia), ACAS Girona* (Spain), Asociación SILOÉ* (Spain), Associació Lambda* (Spain), Centro Social Polivalente Mujer Gades* (Spain), IEMEKAIE* (Spain), Gay-alliance (Ukraine), Asociación Concordia* (Spain), ISKORAK(Croatia)*, Cruz Roja Córdoba (Spain); Asociación ADHARA (Spain); Proyecto Hombre (Spain); Comité Ciudadano Anti-sida del Principado de Asturias (Spain), CASDA-Asociación Ciudadana contra el Sida (Spain), Associació Ciutadana d'Alacant pel VIH (Spain), CIBE Marítim del Comité Ciudadano Anti-sida de la Cominudad Valenciana (Spain), Asociación SOMOS LGTB+ de Aragón (Spain), AIDS-Hilfe NRW e.V (Germany); ARAS-Asociata Romana Anti-SIDA (Romania); Checkpoint LX (Portugal); Association AIDES (France); Legebitra (Slovenia); Czech AIDS Help Societ (Czech Republic); Association "Prevent"(Serbia); Positive Voice (Greece); Aids Hilfe Wien (Austria); CBVCT network Poland; LASS (UK), Le Kioske (France); Anonymous AIDS Association (Hungary); PRAKSIS (Greece), Algarabía (Spain). CBVCTs marked with an asterisk are those which contributed with data for this analysis.