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# SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

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## Assessment of sexually transmitted infection risk and health service among men having sex with men in Addis Ababa: A qualitative study

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**Introduction & Aim:** While anyone who has sex can have a risk of developing sexually transmitted infections and Men having Sex with Men (MSM) are even at greater risk. The study aims to assess Sexual Transmitted Infection (STI) risk and health service access among men sex with men in Addis Ababa.

**Method:** Qualitative study with phenomenological method was used to assess sexual transmitted infection risk among men having sex with men in Addis Ababa from June 16, 2017- August 10, 2017. Snowball sampling method was used to recruit the study participants. Data was analyzed using narrative analysis method.

**Result:** A total of 22 study participants were involved in the study. The main reasons cited to engage in to this life were the way they were raised, being a rape victim and believing that it is their nature. They were at high risk of STI due to having multiple sexual partners, not using condom, absence of anal condom, swapping of sexual partner and using substances. Majority of the study participants visited health facilities while they fall sick. However, some of the study participants prefer to treat themselves for fear of rejection by health professionals. There are reproductive health policies, strategies and programs on family planning, sexual behavior education and others but there is none that to address STI risk among MSM.

**Conclusion:** Though MSM are at higher risk of contracting STIs including HIV, prevention packages are not available. This poses risk to the general heterosexual public. Due to fear of the stigma, MSMs didn't access other health services as well.

**Recommendations:** There should be policy and guideline that protects the health of this population and promotes safe sexual practice among these most at risk population and create a favorable and receptive health service environment. STI risk reduction programs should also target this particular population.

### Biography

Meron Fekade has completed her BA degree from GAMBY Medical Science College, University of Gondar in Sociology and Master of Public Health. She has worked with HIV palliative care in AMREF Ethiopia with HIV positive people and is currently associated to youth development program, which is working with orphans and youth, as a Social Worker and Coordinator.

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