

SHORT COMMUNICATION

PrEParing for the future of prevention

SC 14 5 years activity of the Bergamo Fast Track City network: from 2019 looking toward the future

Authors

I. Mercurio¹, M. Bonomi¹, P. Meli², D. Meli², F. Maggiolo³, C. Pellegris⁴, E. Zanetti⁴, R. Carissoli⁵, N. Butta⁵

Affiliation

¹Croce Rossa Italiana - Comitato di Bergamo, Italy, ²Cooperativa Don Giuseppe Monticelli, Italy,

³Bergamo Fast-Track City, Italy, ⁴Associazione Comunità Emmaus, Italy, ⁵Arcigay Bergamo Cives, Italy

ABSTRACT

Background: Since 19 March 2019 Bergamo Fast Track City Initiative has been active in Bergamo and its province and in the first 5 years of activity has promoted awareness about the importance to take care of sexual health through information and tests for STIs.

The Network offers fast, anonymous and free tests for HIV, HCV and Syphilis in a physical place open once a week (Check Point), during events on the territory (Mobile Test) and in organizations on the territory that deal with specific key populations (homeless, sex workers, IDU, migrants...) (Widespread Test).

Material and methods: During testing activity, people answered to an anonymous questionnaire of the international network Cobatest, composed by general information about the individual and some risk behaviours regarding sexually transmitted infections. Through the analysis of the answers we delineated the characteristics of the clients referring to our services with the aim to represent what has been done in the past and what still need to be done to achieve the WHO's objectives 95-95-95.

Results: During testing activities, 7645 people were tested for HIV, HCV and Syphilis and from November 2021 5202 Cobatest questionnaires were collected (Table A). During the 81 Mobile Test services, 25 municipalities of the Province of Bergamo (composed of 244 municipalities) were reached. 80% of the people declared to do to the test to "check their health" and only 20% to control a risk behaviour. Analysing the possible risk, 46% of people said they hadn't used condoms during the last time they had sex, without difference between males and females (Table B), 60% of people said they had sex with people of different gender and 40% of males said they were MSM.

85 persons received a new diagnosis (1.11%), 24 for HIV (0.31%), 31 for HCV (0.44%) and 30 for Syphilis (0.43%). Since November 2021 when we start using the Cobatest questionnaire, for HIV 7 subjects declared that they were sex workers, 2 MSM, 2 migrants and 2 homeless.

Conclusions: The increase of the testing initiatives over the years allowed the population to raise the adhesion to testing facilities and to take care of their health and especially sexual health.

Our data seem to confirm that very often the people do not have a propensity to recognize in their behaviour a risk for their health even if, however, carrying out the test they make a kind of health control

on themselves.

Data demonstrate the importance of promoting the test among the general population and young people with an educational and promotional purpose. At the same time, it is essential to reach specific key populations with the aim of promoting early diagnosis and bringing the undeclared to light.

Table A

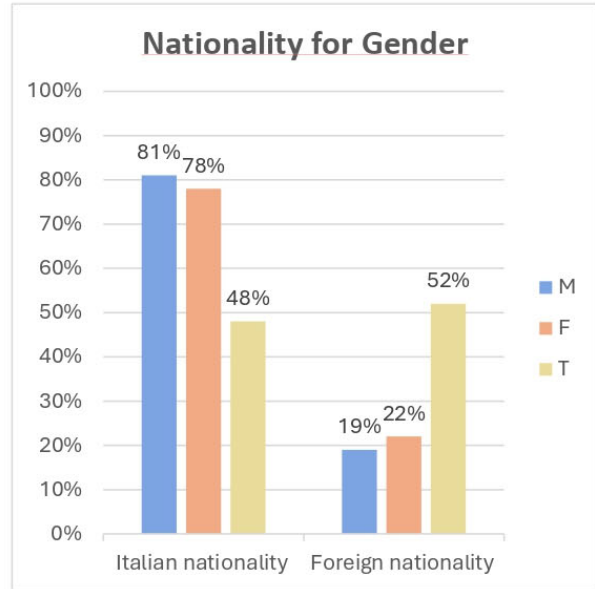
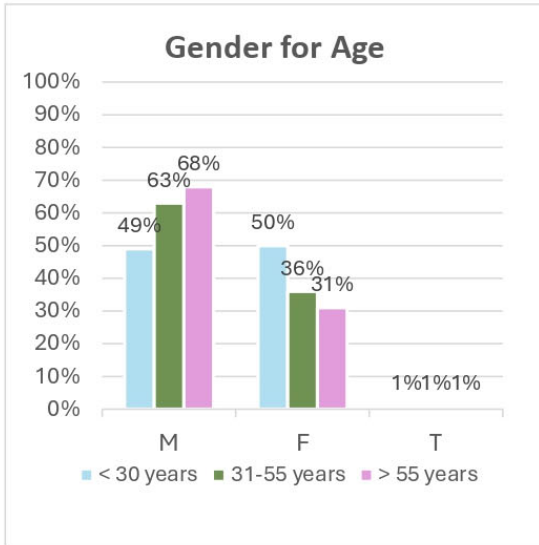


Table B

