

# REAL MEN ARE SAFE (REMAS)

Good Evidence – Risk Reduction

## INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION

### Target Population

- Sexually active men in drug treatment

### Goals of Intervention

- Reduce unprotected vaginal and anal sexual intercourse occasions

### Brief Description

The *Real Men Are Safe* (REMAS) intervention is a workshop of 5 group sessions (90 min each, 3 to 8 men per group). Lectures, role-plays, peer group discussions and motivational self-assessment exercises are conducted with almost equal focus on information delivery and skill building and a lesser focus on motivation. Intervention materials are appropriate for men who have sex exclusively with women, as well as men who have sex with men. Topics include HIV/AIDS information, HIV risky behaviors (both sexual and injection practices), condom demonstration, identifying triggers, risk reduction problem solving, enhancing sex without drugs, and responsibility and communication in sexual relationships.

### Theoretical Basis

- Information-Motivation-Behavioral Change (IMB) Model

### Intervention Duration

- Five 90-minute group sessions

### Intervention Setting

- Methadone clinics, psychosocial outpatient clinics

### Deliverer

- Male counselors

### Delivery Methods

- Counseling
- Demonstration
- Discussion
- Exercises
- Lecture
- Practice
- Role play

## INTERVENTION PACKAGE INFORMATION

The intervention package and training are available through [Sociometrics](#) under the name [Real Men Are Safe](#).

This intervention is also available as a download from [Clinical Trails Network Dissemination Library](#) at [REMAS](#).

## EVALUATION STUDY AND RESULTS

The original evaluation was conducted in Hartford, CT; New York, NY; Philadelphia, PA; Raleigh, NC; Seattle, WA; San Francisco, CA; Norwalk, CT; Huntington, WV; High Point, NC; Columbia, SC; Toledo, OH; Santa Fe, NM; and Rancho Cucamonga, CA between 2004 and 2006.

### Key Intervention Effects

- Reduced unprotected sex

### Study Sample

The analytic study sample of 417 men is characterized by the following:

- 56% white, 28% black or African American, 13% Hispanic/Latino, 2% American Indian, 1% Asian, 1% other
- 100% male (% MSM not reported)
- Mean age of 40 years
- Mean education of 12.2 years

### Recruitment Settings

Methadone clinics and psychosocial outpatient clinics

### Eligibility Criteria

Men were eligible if they were at least 18 years of age, currently in methadone treatment for 30 days or more at a participating clinic, engaging in unprotected vaginal or anal intercourse during the past 6 months (with women or men or both), able to speak and understand English, free of observable gross mental status impairment, and did not have a primary sexual partner intending to get pregnant during the study period.

### Assignment Method

Cohorts of 3 to 8 men (N = 590 men) were randomly assigned to 1 of 2 groups: REMAS intervention (n = 291) or HIV Education comparison (n = 299).

### Comparison Group

The HIV Education comparison group received 1 session (60 minutes) that represented a standardized treatment-as-usual intervention. It covered only the information component of the IMB Model and consisted of selected educational material from the first 2 sessions of the REMAS intervention, including HIV/AIDS

definitions, transmission, testing and counseling, treatment, and prevention. Counselors delivered this session using flip charts and informational and resource hand out materials.

### Relevant Outcomes Measured and Follow-up Time

- Sex behaviors (including frequency of unprotected vaginal and anal sexual occasions by partner type during the last 90 days and condom use by partner type) were measured at 3 and 6 months post-intervention.

### Participant Retention

- Intervention
  - 75% retained at 3 months
  - 65% retained at 6 months
- Control
  - 75% retained at 3 months
  - 70% retained at 6 months

### Significant Findings

- Intervention participants reported significantly fewer unprotected sexual occasions in past 90 days than comparison participants at 3-month ( $p < .001$ ) and 6-month follow-ups ( $p < .001$ ).
- In subset analyses, intervention participants who attended at least 3 REMAS intervention sessions (completers) reported significantly fewer unprotected sexual occasions with any partner at 3-month ( $p < .0001$ ) and 6-month follow-ups ( $p < .0001$ ) than participants who attended the single HIV Education session.
- Additional significant intervention effects among completers were reported for the following outcomes: unprotected sexual occasions with regular partners at 3-month follow-up ( $p < .0001$ ) and 6-month follow-up ( $p < .0001$ ); unprotected sexual occasions with casual partners at 3-month follow-up ( $p < .0002$ ).

### Considerations

- This intervention fails to meet the best-evidence criteria due to the fact that cohorts of 3-8 men were allocated to treatment groups, but analyses were at the individual level without analytic adjustment.

## REFERENCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Calsyn, D. A., Hatch-Maillette, M., Tross, S., Doyle, S. R., Crits-Christoph, P., Song, Y. S., . . . Berns, S. B. (2009). [Motivational and skills training HIV/sexually transmitted infection sexual risk reduction groups for men.](#) *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 37*, 138-150.

Lead researcher for *Real Men are Safe (REMAS)*, **Dr. Donald A. Calsyn** passed away on February 3, 2013.

**At this time there is no contact information for this intervention.**

