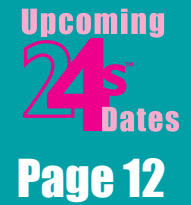
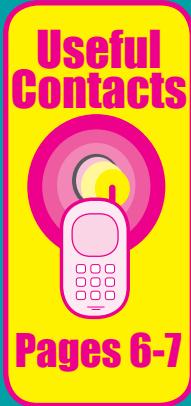


the SOURCE

●●●● health information for the LGBT community

HIV Testing Offered to Men at Cruising Grounds



Welcome to Issue 25 of The Source.

This issue we talk to WLGMP's Screening Officer about the new HIV testing service offered at cruising grounds in West London. We highlight the success of the Wellness Day for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Men who have sex with men, and feedback on the successful health and wellbeing workshops offered as part of the Gaywise Festival (GFEST) in November last year.

Our agony Auntie Jee is back with her problem page and our Contacts section provides information on local support services, sexual health clinics and LGBT youth groups.

We would like to hear your thoughts on The Source, or on any other issues of interest to you, so please call or e-mail us with any comments, suggestions or ideas you may have to 0800 587 8302 or thesource@westlondongmp.org.uk

Success at Wellness Day 2011



To coincide with Black History Month in October last year, West London Gay Men's Project (WLGMP) held its second

Wellness Day for Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) Men who are Gay, Bi or men who have sex with men (MSM).

Success at Wellness Day 2011



The free event was organised by WLGMP in order to create a safe space where BAME MSM could share their experiences, celebrate talents and inform each other about health and wellness topics, including HIV.

The event was run by Black and Asian MSM with wide experience of working in their communities, and was held at the welcoming Lilla Huset venue in Hammersmith. Openly gay ex NBA Basketball star, educator and political activist, John Amaechi sent a letter of support, which opened the day on an inspiring note.

Activities included a drama-based workshop exploring BAME MSM role models plus a presentation and discussion about asylum seekers. Other

workshops about how sexual stereotyping affects men from ethnic minorities, exploring self-worth, being authentic versus artificial, and the gay representation in Bollywood films all added to a varied, interesting and informative day.

Special thanks to all the facilitators: Dr Patrick Williams, Haydn Forde, Stephen Brown, Gamal Turawa, Ibrahim Ismail and Daniel Fry.

The event attracted a good mixture of guys which gave them the opportunity to make new friends, reunite with old ones and help create a sense of community. Those attending the event described the day as empowering, informative and most of all, fun!



HIV Testing Offered to Men at Cruising Grounds

The Source speaks to Iain, Screening Officer at West London Gay Men's Project about their rapid HIV testing service and a new initiative to offer testing at cruising grounds in West London...

Tell us a bit about the HIV testing service offered by WLGMP

Currently we run three testing sessions across West London in Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow, all offering rapid HIV tests to gay and bisexual men in the evening and weekends. Our session in Hammersmith is currently the only community HIV testing service available on a Sunday in London.

Are all staff professionally trained to carry out HIV tests?

Yes, every person who carries out tests for WLGMP has been trained by staff from the West London Centre for Sexual Health at Charing Cross Hospital. We also have ongoing client evaluation of the service and all staff attend refresher training on an annual basis.

So why offer HIV tests at a cruising ground?

Even though we make testing more accessible by holding evening and weekend sessions, there are still a

lot of men who don't want to attend these venues for various reasons. In particular many men at cruising grounds are not out to their family and friends and so are too afraid of being discovered to test. In the past when we've spoken to them during outreach sessions many of them say that they have never tested as they don't want to be seen going to a clinic.

Run me through the actual procedure...

Before we start with the actual test we talk to the client about why they've come to test, answer the questions they may have and discuss any risks they've taken sexually. The test itself involves pricking a finger with a disposable lancet and taking some blood. The test is 99.96% accurate but if there is a 'reactive' result it still needs to be confirmed as a 'positive' result with a confirmatory test at a suitable clinic arranged with the client. A 'negative' result is always 100% accurate at the time of testing.

Wouldn't a reactive test result be difficult to deal with in this environment?

Getting a reactive result can be difficult wherever it happens, but our staff are trained to deal with this situation and support the client as they come to terms with the result. Before they leave staff make sure that guys are able to contact someone to speak to such as a friend or relative, if they need to, or we can offer them support. We always follow up the client with a phone call to make sure that they have attended a clinic for a confirmatory test and that they are feeling supported.

How do you maintain privacy in a public area?

We use a tent which is pitched close to car parking areas to provide a safe space for staff and the men testing. While one member of the team is taking the person through the test, the other stays close to the tent and maintains a boundary to ensure that people can't stand and listen in.

Isn't it difficult to maintain hygiene outside of a clinical setting?

As with all our venues, we use a disposable testing kit which contains sterile products for one time use only. Staff use ant-virus/bacteria hand gel and wear latex gloves during the test procedure. Sterile wipes are also used to prepare the client's finger before using the



lancet, so there is no problem with maintaining hygiene.

How can I find out where and when HIV testing sessions are taking place?

We use the website Squirt.org to let people know when will be going along to a particular cruising ground. Alternatively, you can call our helpline on **0800 587 8302** (free from landlines) or **020 8583 2474** (local rate from mobiles) or visit our website www.westlondongmp.org.uk.

Do you offer any other services apart from testing?

Currently we are only able to offer HIV tests but if we see that there is a demand for other STI testing or vaccination services we may look into the possibility of setting up such services.

For details of where to find your nearest GUM/Sexual Health Clinic in the London area visit the GMFA webpage; www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices/clinics. For details of when WLGMP are testing at Cruising grounds call **0800 587 8302**.

CONTACTS

Local Support Services

Naz Project London Services for Spanish, Portuguese, Muslim, Somali, Ethiopian & Asian men and services for BME women 📞 020 8741 1879 🌐 www.naz.org.uk

Living Well Self Management Programme and support for people living with HIV 📞 020 8746 2274 🌐 www.livingwelluk.com

HART (Hillingdon AIDS Response Trust) Practical and emotional support to people affected by HIV and AIDS 📞 01895 813874

The Bridge, Fulham Broadway Methodist Church Drop-in, therapies and counselling for people living with HIV Thursdays 2pm-8pm 📞 020 7381 3806

Hounslow African Health Project Provides services around health and social care to the African migrant communities in the Borough of Hounslow 📞 020 8580 1046

OutWest Social and support group for the LGBT community in West London 📞 020 8892 5061 🌐 www.outwest.org.uk 📧 membership@outwest.org.uk

North West London Lesbian & Gay Group 📞 07941 707884 🌐 www.nwlgay.com 📧 nwllgg@hotmail.co.uk

West London LGBT Forum 📞 020 8280 2286 🌐 www.ealingcvcs.org.uk 📧 lgbt@ealingcvcs.org.uk

The River House Drop-in for people living with and affected by HIV 📞 020 8753 5190 🌐 www.riverhousetrust.org.uk

Sexual Health Clinics

Ealing Hospital Level 8 Clinic, Pasteur Suite 📞 020 8967 5555 (reception) no appointment necessary

West London Centre for Sexual Health (Hammersmith) West 6 Clinic for men who have sex with men, Tuesdays 5.30 pm - 7.30pm
Appointments preferred – limited walk-in appointments. Arrive before 7.15pm

Orange Clinic, for women who have sex with women, Wednesdays 1.30pm – 7pm
📞 020 8846 6699 Appointments 📞 020 8846 1579 Health Advisers

West Middlesex Hospital Sexual Health Clinic (Hounslow)
📞 020 8321 5718 (reception) no appointment necessary

Tudor Centre (Uxbridge / Hillingdon) 📞 01895 279537 (reception) appointment only

Patrick Clements Centre (Brent) 2nd Floor Central Middlesex Hospital
📞 020 8453 2221 / 2536 walk-in & appointments (limited)

Northwick Park Dept. of GUM (Brent/Harrow) 📞 020 8869 3142
walk-in & appointments (limited)

CONTACTS

LGBT Youth Groups

Mosaic LGBT Youth Centre (Brent)

- 📞 www.mosaicyouth.org.uk
 - ✉ info@mosaicyouth.org.uk
 - ☎ 07931 336 668
- or free phone 0800 043 3411

Your Zone (Ealing)

- ☎ 07985 126 442
- ✉ For email contact please use the Mosaic address above.

Gendered Intelligence Youth Group

- Support group for trans, gender queer or questioning young people
- ✉ www.genderedintelligence.co.uk (email form on-line)

Other Useful Numbers / Sources of Information

West London Gay Men's Project Sexual Health Advice Line

- ☎ 0800 587 8302 / 020 8583 2474
- ✉ info@westlondongmp.org.uk
- 🌐 www.westlondongmp.org.uk

London's Health Directory for Gay Men on the Web

- 🌐 www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices

NHS Helpline

- ☎ 0845 46 47
- 🌐 www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

National HIV/AIDS/STI Helpline

- ☎ 0800 567 123

THT Direct

- ☎ 0845 12 21 200

London Lesbian & Gay Switchboard

- ☎ 020 7837 7324

The Beaumont Society

- Support network for transgender people
- ☎ **Help line 07000 287878** (open Tuesdays & Thursdays between 7pm and 11pm hours)
 - 🌐 www.beaumontsociety.org.uk

Free Fast HIV Testing Services
run by **WLGMP**

west london
gmp
gay men's project

EALING

Every Wednesday 6pm – 8pm
(arrive by 7.30pm)
The Carers' Centre
46 South Ealing Rd,
(Side entrance off Lothair Rd)
Ealing W5 4QA

HOUNSLOW

(STI testing available
from 6pm-7pm)

Every Thursday 6pm – 7.30pm
(arrive by 7pm)
Heart of Hounslow Polyclinic
92 Bath Road, Hounslow TW3 3EL

HAMMERSMITH

Every Sunday 2pm – 4pm
(arrive by 3.30pm)
Naz Project London,
30 Blacks Rd,
Hammersmith W6 9DT

For more information about the services please contact West London GMP on **0800 587 8302**
Walk-in service, no appointment necessary.

Local Police Community Safety Units

EALING

020 8246 1112

HAMMERSMITH

020 8246 2828

HOUNSLOW

020 8721 9104

IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS dial 999

CRIMESTOPPERS
0800 555 111

PLEASE GO TO A CLINIC IMMEDIATELY

EXPRESS YOURSELF!



As well as doing regular outreach work in pubs, clubs, saunas and cruising grounds, the WLGMP team also sometimes offer workshops on health and wellbeing issues.

WLGMP offered three workshops as part of the Gaywise Festival (GFEST) in 2011; London's premier LGBT cross-arts festival. 25 young people from West Thames College and Mosaic LGBT Youth Centre participated. The workshops were led by Stephen, Black Men's Worker and focused on self-expression through mask-making. Stephen says;

'Like many communities, gay, bi and same gender loving Black and Asian men sometimes have to juggle with hiding their true selves. The workshops encouraged the participants, whether LGBT or straight, to reflect on the aspects of their own identity – those they hide and those they share with others.'

Ascar, Asian Men's Worker and Manuel, Health Trainer also helped run sessions. At the end of the sessions young people discussed each other's creations and West Thames College held an exhibition of the masks for World AIDS Day.

Daniel, Community Outreach Coordinator and Ascar ran another sexual health and relationships workshop with gay and bi men living in sheltered accommodation. The workshop included an interactive quiz, condom game and an opportunity for the men to be 'agony aunts' and come up with solutions to difficult relationship scenarios.



The aim was to build confidence, knowledge and assertiveness and the residents have invited WLGMP back to run a workshop on self esteem in February.

Here is a selection of comments from guys attending the sessions:

Friendly, warm relaxed atmosphere. Even though it was a group it felt like a 1-2-1. I thought the trainers were very knowledgeable and I would love to have them come back. I give them 11/10!

I never knew how much fun I could have while expressing myself.

It was fun and I learnt a lot and how to respect everyone, as everyone is different.

Judging by what others did, I learnt about what they really felt inside.

It was very interesting to participate in the quiz and have gained a lot of important knowledge about aspects sexual health. As a gay man I am very conscious about this subject. I found you guys very thorough in how you conduct your workshops and has been very beneficial to all of us in the house.

For more information about workshops from West London Gay Men's Project, contact support@westlondongmp.org.uk.

Ask Auntie Jee



If you have a problem that you would like Auntie Jee to answer, email it to thesource@westlondongmp.org.uk or send it by post to: West London Gay Men's Project, Well-being & Involvement Section, Community Services, Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow, TW3 4DN.

Dear Auntie Jee,

A friend and I were having a discussion about cervical smear tests. I've just turned 30 and am a lesbian, so assumed I don't need to have one. Is this the case?
Julia, Heston

Dear Julia, Thank you for writing in. Unfortunately, there's a myth that cervical screening is only essential for straight women. New research recommends that health professionals need to do more to raise awareness among the lesbian community that women in same sex relationships are at risk, and need to get regular screenings for cervical cancer.

The Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) that is present in almost 100% of cervical cancer cases can be transmitted in same sex relationships, according to a new report.

Previously it was believed that the HPV virus could only be passed through straight relationships, leading to the misconception that lesbian women aren't at risk from cervical cancer and don't need to be screened. Although some

lesbians may never have had a relationship with a man, there's often a chance that a partner may have. Research shows that around 80 per cent of lesbians have had a sexual relationship with a man at some stage in their life.

Any exchange of bodily fluids can pass the HPV between two people, so a lesbian could contract the infection from her partner.

GPs recommend that women between the ages of 25 and 64 have a cervical smear test every 3-5 years. If you are registered with a GP, then you should get an automatic reminder of when your next test is due. As you are over 25 and have never had a smear test I would recommend you get in touch with your GP. If you prefer to be tested at a women who have sex with women (WSW) clinic, you could make an appointment with the Orange Clinic at West London Centre for Sexual Health. Full details can be found at www.chelwest.nhs.uk.

It's estimated that screening for cervical cancer saves up to 6,000 lives every year, so be sure, be safe and get tested.

Dear Auntie Jee

Are you in a Civil Partnership?

Robert Stocker, a PhD student at City University London is seeking participants for his study on men's experiences of civil partnerships in the UK. Nearly 26,000 male couples have entered civil partnerships in the UK. However, not much is known about why they do, their experiences, what it means to them, and how these relationships are lived in everyday life.

This research aims to provide a new perspective on same-sex relationships and experiences of intimacy between men.

If you are interested in taking part in an interview please contact him directly at: **Robert.stocker.1@city.ac.uk** or **020 7040 5966**. You can also find more information on Facebook: **Men-in-Civil-Partnerships-Research Study**.

West London Trans Group

Last Friday of every month 7.30pm- 9.30pm

**@ The Carers' Centre, 46 South Ealing Rd,
(Side entrance off Lothair Rd) Ealing W5 4QA**

Nearest tube: South Ealing (Piccadilly Line) Bus route: 65

**Are you Trans? Would you like to meet up with other Trans people in West London?
If so, then come along to our Trans Drop-in Group.**

- Meet other men and women from Trans communities in a relaxed setting
- Free light refreshments,
- Information about the West London Gender Variant Association (WLGVA)
- Get involved in supporting and making a difference to other Trans people in West London
- Come on your own or bring your friends and/or family



**If you would like to attend please email:
info@westlondongmp.org.uk
or call 0800 587 8302/020 8583 2474**

**Changing facilities available
Wheelchair accessible**

Upcoming 24s™ Dates

Here are the upcoming dates for 24s, West London Gay Men's Project's free bulk condom and lube distribution scheme. To sign up to the scheme and collect your condoms and lube, just speak to one of our friendly outreach workers on the night - they'll be wearing WLGM or 24s T-shirts. You can also pick up 24s bags at our Rapid HIV Testing Services. **Alternatively, call 0800 587 8302 or email 24s@westlondongmp.org.uk.**

January

- **Ted's Place**

305a Northend Road, W14 9NS

Mon 9th 8.30pm – 11pm

- **Club Bootylicious**

Club Coliseum, 1 Nine Elms Lane,
Vauxhall SW8 5NQ

Sat 21st 11pm – 2am

- **West 5**

Popes Lane, South Ealing W5 4NB

Fri 27th 9pm – 12am

February

- **Club Caribana**

65 Goding Street, Vauxhall, SE11 5AW

Sat 11th 11.30pm – 2am

- **Urban Desi Anexo Bar & Club**

61 Turnmill Street, Farringdon EC1M 5PT

Sat 11th 11pm – 2am

- **Ted's Place**

305a Northend Road, W14 9NS

Fri 17th 8.30pm – 12am

- **Hope & Anchor**

20 Macbeth St, Hammersmith W6 9JJ

Fri 17th 8.30pm – 12am

- **The George**

114 Twickenham Road, Isleworth, TW7 7DJ

Fri 24th 8pm – 12am

- **West 5**

Popes Lane, South Ealing W5 4NB

Sat 25th 9pm – 12am

March

- **Richmond Arms**

20 The Square, Richmond TW9 1DZ

Sat 3rd 8pm – 11pm

- **Urban Desi Anexo Bar & Club**

61 Turnmill Street, Farringdon EC1M 5PT

Sat 10th 10.30pm – 1am

- **Hope & Anchor**

20 Macbeth St, Hammersmith W6 9JJ

Thurs 15th 7.30pm – 10.30pm

- **Ted's Place**

305a Northend Road, W14 9NS

Fri 16th 9.30pm – 12am

- **Club Kali**

The Dome, 1 Dartmouth Park Hill N19 5QQ

Fri 16th 10pm – 1am

- **Club Exilio**

Guys Bar, Boland House,
St Thomas St, London Bridge SE1 9RT

Sat 17th 11pm – 2am

- **West 5**

Popes Lane, South Ealing W5 4NB

Fri 23rd 9pm – 12am

- **Windsor Castle**

152 Bath Road, Hounslow TW3 3ET

Sat 24th 9pm – 12am

Shift times & dates may be subject to change – please check www.westlondongmp.org.uk for updates.