



London's HIV Stigma Empowerment Programme

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AMSTERDAM

FAST-TRACK CITIES 2023

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× City of
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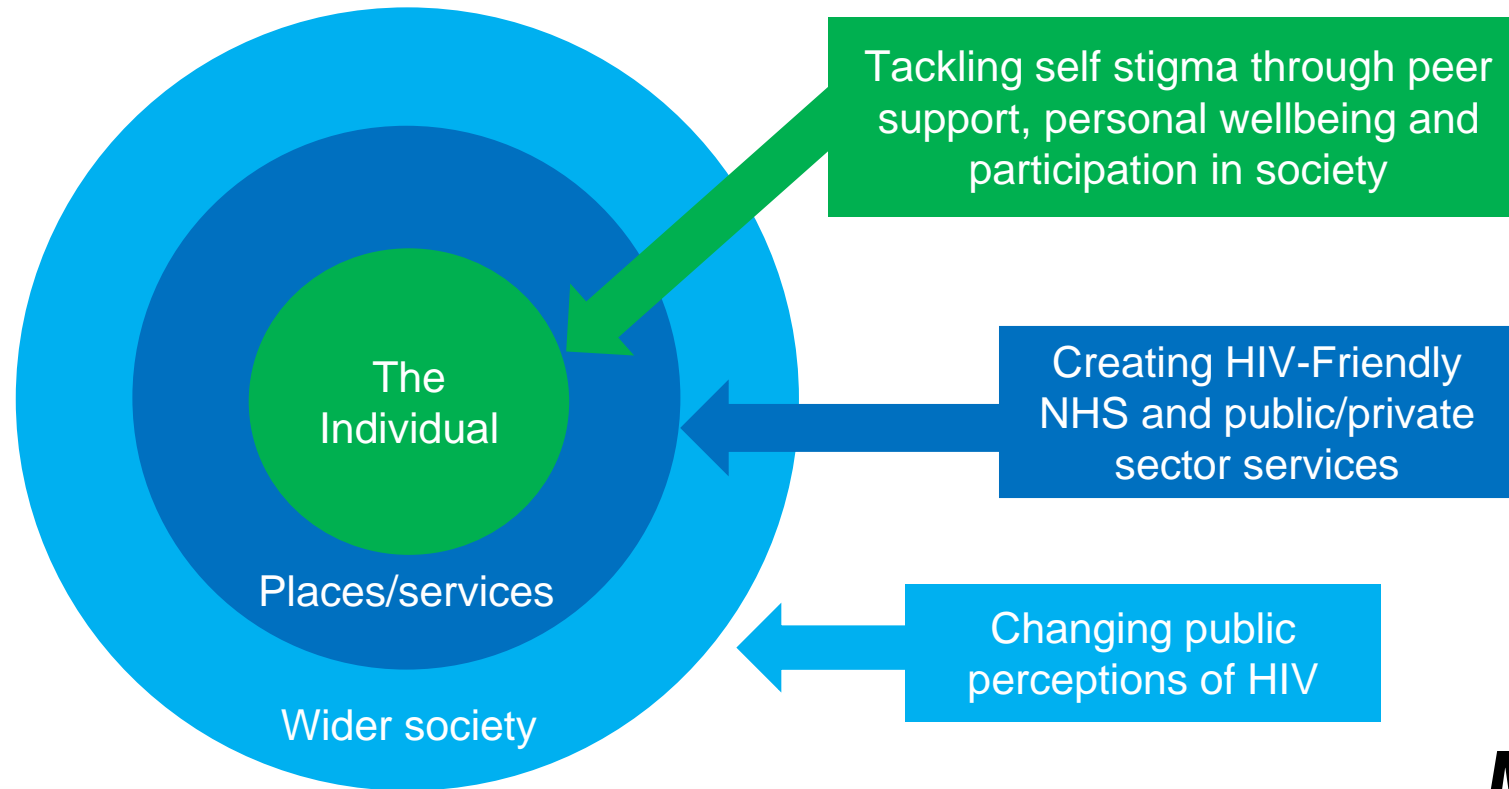
× GGD
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FTCI London approaches to tackling stigma



Three workstreams tackle different forms:



Addressing internalised or self-stigma – The Empowerment Programme

In 2021 we convened a ‘community of practice’ to build on existing work to increase confidence & skills for people with HIV and deliver:

1. **Workshops** combining peer support, resilience- and skills-building activities and opportunities to explore and address stigma and its effects.
2. **Training and support for a diverse group of HIV ambassadors**, to speak out against stigma and discrimination via the workstreams focusing on services and wider society.



2022: Key agreed workshop outcomes

For individuals completing the Empowerment Programme to:

- Develop a support network
- Understand internalised/self-stigma
- Understand what HIV is, U=U and how to live well with HIV
- Build self-acceptance, self-esteem, and an individual's sense of power

Delivery methods:

- 6 projects (between 9 organisations), offered up to 3 workshop courses, usually across several sessions, either virtually, in person, or hybrid
- Peer-delivered workshop facilitation
- Variety of approaches to support different populations:
Targeted groups: women, MSM, Black African communities, Spanish and Portuguese speakers, clinic-based (where stigma had prevented access to HIV organisations)
Life coaching sessions
Magazine, podcasts and video development

Results example:

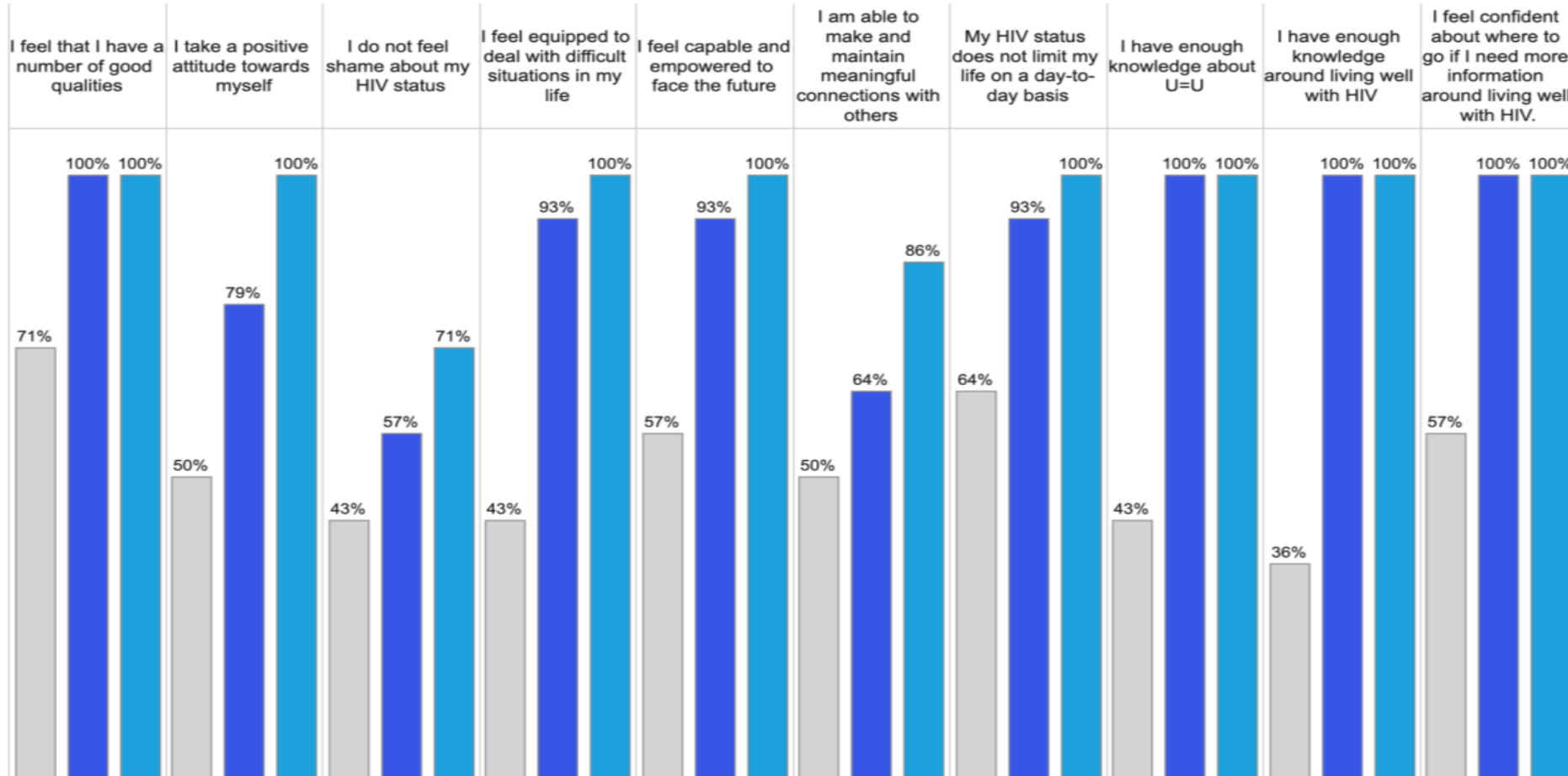


Legend:

■ Initial Results

■ Post-Intervention Results

■ 3 month Post-Intervention Results



Lessons Learned

- Peer delivery supported open group discussions
- Flexible session length supported engagement and learning
- Use conversational, non-technical approach/language to deliver treatment and U=U information
- Ensure sufficient opportunity to discuss issues such as telling others (especially partners) about HIV
- Benefits in having *both* tailored, segmented groups *and* diverse mixed groups to allow participants to appreciate and tackle unconscious bias, preconceptions and stereotypes
- Recruitment and retention a challenge. One-to-one contact/support needed (particularly before workshops), weekend delivery preferred

Recommendations

- Increase collaboration and communication between organisations to improve referral pathways for this and other support and to share digital resources and different learning approaches
- Consider targeted groups for specific needs and challenges (eg women, re- family planning, safety etc.)
- Link and signpost to financial and social support services to address additional life challenges
- Ensure facilitators have access to supervision to address the complex needs and challenges, such as trauma and suicidal ideation

[Link to End of Project Report](#)

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With thanks to

