Social Media and Hook-up sites

How do they affect the way we handle disclosure?

How can we use them to fight HIV?

#NSFW
Who on earth is this?

- Tom Hayes - from Birmingham, UK
- Gay man - came out at 13 years old
- Diagnosed HIV+ in August 2011 after 7 year relationship
- Started blogging about my journey one week after diagnosis
- Now a Peer Support Mentor with Terrence Higgins Trust
- A spokesperson on TV, Radio for HIV in UK
- Runs a UK magazine for people living with HIV - beyondpositive.org
Seeing as we’re doing American quotes

“No one can make you inferior without your consent” -
- Eleanor Roosevelt

“I used to bite my tongue and hold my breath
Scared to rock the boat and make a mess
So I sat quietly, agreed politely
I guess that I forgot I had a choice
I let you push me past the breaking point
I stood for nothing, so I fell for everything”
- Katy Perry
The Hook-up apps...

The hook-up app phenomenon started with Grindr in 2009 with 109,000 users by the end of the year...
Who are MSM?
The Hook-up apps...

Since then the sector has exploded...

...these are just the top 10 in the iTunes store, there are at least a hundred at this time.
How does it work?

- The app uses GPS (Global Positioning Satellites) to work out your location.

- It then shows you your location and those nearest to you (in order of distance).
How does it work?

- You then create a profile with a picture, a name and what you’re looking for.
- This is me. Yes, I use Grindr!
- Mine is a fairly respectable profile, but...
How does it work?

- Whilst some of us are looking for friends, networking and offering sexual health advice others are looking for anonymous sex.

- Many don’t identify as “gay” or “bi” and will never access gay social venues or gay magazines etc.

- Large numbers of the profiles have no face photo and are looking for “discreet” sex - this is often extra-relationship.
How does it work?

- You’re then free to exchange:
  - Messages
  - Photos
  - Your exact GPS location on a map.

- Or bookmark/favourite the guy for later.

- Then if/when you’re ready you can meet up.
Discussing HIV Status

I have my HIV+ status on my profile, and I get messages like this...

...so why would people disclose and set themselves up for such unpleasant messages?
Reaching users...

Pop up adverts on Grindr - this one was unhelpful, but it shows potential. You can target your adverts to users in a specific area via GPS.

Banner adverts at bottom of screen - easily clicked by mistake - leading users to your site.
Social Media - my experience...

Tom [ukpositivelad]
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HIV+ & Gay. I blog, write and talk on radio/TV about life with HIV. Ambassador for @SavingLivesUK. Editor of @Beyond_Positive. Columnist for @MidlandsZone
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Twitter

Facebook
Using social media to drive prevention & information campaigns

This is beyond positive, the magazine I run. We get 67% of our traffic through Twitter & Facebook alone.
Using social media to drive prevention & information campaigns

Too many charities / programmes do not have active Twitter / Facebook accounts - and the ones that largely “Tweet out” rather than interacting with their followers.

Twitter and Facebook aren’t education specific sites, they’re social sites and you need to tailor your Twitter / Facebook content to suit the social environment.
Using social media to drive prevention & information campaigns

Engaging on twitter / facebook effectively:

- Interact with your followers, ask them how they are - and what they’re doing, start casual conversations and banter with those who reply. Build rapport.

- Run competitions. Nothing gets people to follow you and click links like FREE STUFF. Even if it’s condoms or charity t-shirts.

- Rule of thumb is 20% information, 80% conversation.

- Stay friendly. Stay chatty.
Using social media to drive prevention & information campaigns

This condom competition on our @beyond_positive twitter page was “retweeted” (shared) over 1,000 times and seen by over 1,200,000 people. AT ABSOLUTELY NO COST.

WIN
Simply RT this tweet to win yourself 366 condoms!

Have teamed up with freedoms shop

One for every day of the year and an extra one for your birthday ;-)
Using social media to drive prevention & information campaigns

FINALLY Challenge damaging behaviour / language when you see it - in a friendly yet informative way...

Angela Liana 乇
@ohnogrl

Travis in Oregon: the closest guy on grindr was 60 miles away and HIV +...& I was like "god you're hot but your Hivvy and fucking Far."
Thank you

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