

# BCN Checkpoint: Same-day confirmation of reactive HIV rapid test with Point Of Care PCR test accelerates Linkage to Care and reduces anxiety

## OBJECTIVES

The introduction in 2006 of the rapid HIV test by BCN Checkpoint, a community-based HIV testing center for MSM, has been a successful step forwards in the uptake of testing.

Nevertheless, HIV serostatus should be reported as HIV positive only when a reactive result has been tested again using a different assay (WHO guidelines 2015<sup>1</sup>).

The standard confirmation test has been the Western Blot test, but results take around 7 days to come back.

This study explores the possibility of Point of Care (POC) PCR testing for a same-day confirmation.

## METHODS

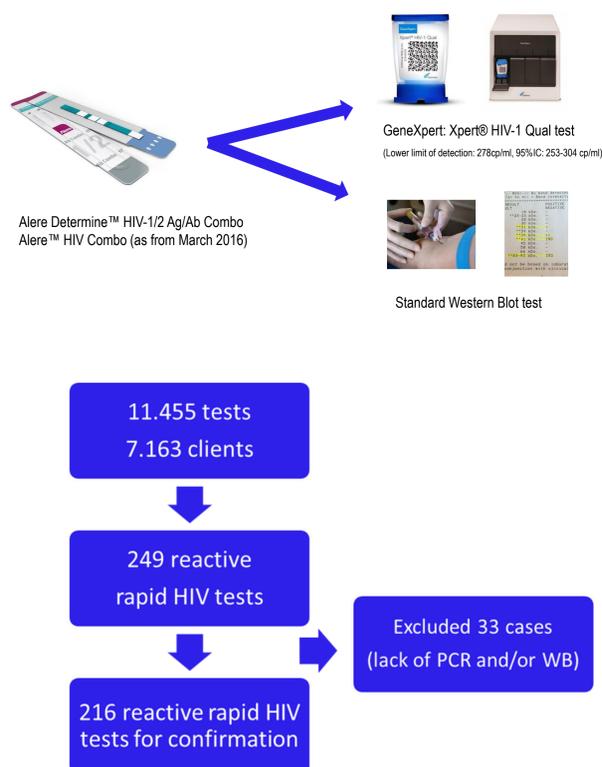
Between March 2015 and September 2016 HIV rapid test (Alere Determine™ HIV-1/2 Ag/Ab Combo and Alere™ HIV Combo) was performed to all clients that came to BCN Checkpoint for an HIV test.

When the rapid HIV test was reactive a POC PCR test (GeneXpert Xpert® HIV-1 Qual, with a lower limit of detection on WHO standards is 278cp/ml, 95%IC: 253-304 cp/ml, was performed in parallel to the standard Western Blot test.

All HIV confirmed positive cases received emotional support by peers (people living with HIV), were informed and prepared for treatment initiation and linked to HIV hospital in less than 15 days (75%)..

## RESULTS

During the period March 2015 and September 2016 a total of 11.455 tests were performed to 7.163 different clients. A total of 249 reactive rapid HIV tests were found. For analysis a total of 33 cases were excluded due to the lack of PCR and/or WB test.



Results of comparison of the 216 cases to confirm are shown in the table below

Results	n	%	Serostatus HIV	Interpretation
PCR positive WB positive	194	89.8%	+	Confirmed positive results
PCR negative WB negative or indeterminate	14	6.5%	-	Confirmed false positive results
PCR positive WB negative or indeterminate	3	1.4%	+	Recent infections
PCR negative WB positive	5	2.3%	+	Confirmed positive results: HIV controllers
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>100%</b>		

## SUMMARY

- The Point Of Care PCR assay is easy to use and feasible in a community-based center
- Reducing time for confirmation to 90 minutes has been possible in 91.2% (197/216) of cases with positive PCR result
- In cases of a negative PCR result an additional test is needed (WB, Elisa or PCR quantitative)
- PCR assays permitted to confirm very recent HIV infections
- Clients expressed satisfaction with same-day confirmation and less anxiety



## REFERENCES

1. Consolidated guidelines on HIV testing services. WHO. Publication date: July 2015.

## AUTHORS

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