

sex workers are safe sex professionals



RhED is currently conducting research with people who use the internet to do sex work. The study is looking at the health, practices and needs of these individuals.

You may run a small business operation with your own website or you might just use social networking sites to find clients. It might be your full time job or something that you are just trying out.

No matter how you work we are interested in hearing from you.

You can either come and see us at our St Kilda office or we may be able to come to you. Participants will be financially reimbursed for their time.

If you have any questions or would like to take part please call Christian at RhED on 1800 458 752.



SHANTUSI
Surveying HIV And Need
Throughout the Unregulated Sex Industry

RhED – Resourcing Health and Education in the Sex Industry
In partnership with
Melbourne Sexual Health Centre and
Burnet Institute

Workers in the unregulated sex industry in Victoria (ie street based sex workers, migrant sex workers in unregulated brothels and sex workers who source their clients on the internet) are considered a 'hidden' population who access testing at lower rates than those in the regulated sex work industry. The objective of this project is to explore whether workers in the unregulated sex industry have a higher risk of being infected by HIV, or if HIV is a greater problem in the unregulated sector.

RhED is seeking to conduct audio-taped interviews with 100 street-based sex workers, 30-50 migrant workers in illegal brothels and 50-70 workers who meet their clients through the internet (a maximum total of 220 participants will be sought). Participants will be invited to take part in a 3-stage research process: completing a short survey (approx 5 minutes), an interview (approx 45 mins) and a self-administered oral swab to be tested for HIV. The latter involves the participant simply wiping the inside of their mouth with a testing swab.

Throughout their involvement in SHANTUSI, participants will be offered health promotion information and resources. When they have completed their involvement in the questionnaire, interview and oral swab, they will be offered a referral to a relevant health service for sexual health screening, if they choose to do this.

All interview transcripts will be kept and stored in a secure, password protected computer database and after seven years all transcripts will be destroyed. As recordings are digital, these will be erased from the digital voice recorder once the interview has been transcribed.

The final report and a short summary will be made available after the project finishes. It will be provided to agencies and government departments that have an interest in both the sex industry and public health matters from both a regulatory and service standpoint. Given the steps taken to ensure confidentiality, there will be no means of contacting participants directly to inform them of its completion. However, the final report and summary of findings will be available to collect from RhED at 10 Inkerman Street, St Kilda. The use of this site as a 'drop-in' for many participants will spread awareness of the availability of the final report and summary throughout what is a relatively close knit community bound by informal networks.

For more information about SHANTUSI, please contact RhED on 1800 458 752.