

## Monkeypox outbreak RCCE toolkit

### **ASSET: Talking points for presenters making public announcements at Pride events, club nights, and summer festivals**

1 July 2022

#### **Background:**

*Over the last few months, hundreds of people in Europe have caught an infection called monkeypox – many of them through having sex at or after an event, party, or festival. Monkeypox can infect anyone, but so far in this outbreak men who have sex with men have been the most affected. Monkeypox causes a painful rash and people who have weak immune systems, pregnant women, and young children can become very ill from it.*

*When presenters make public announcements at Pride events, club nights, and summer festivals, they have a great opportunity to join response efforts and protect people from monkeypox. They can target information and advice on how to protect each other from monkeypox to the people most at risk. They can let men who have sex with men know that their group is the most affected by monkeypox and that they may want to take extra care.*

*It may be most effective to target these speaking points to a presenter or event host who you trust to talk about monkeypox without shaming people or trivialising the subject. Presenters or hosts who have collaborated with the health sector before, for example to communicate about HIV or sexual health issues, could be a good starting point.*

#### **What information should presenters give audiences**

##### **Do:**

- give people the facts about monkeypox;
- tell them who is most at risk, and how we can protect each other;
- say where they can find reliable information on monkeypox;
- give information on how to access health services, including clinics for sexually transmitted infections.

##### **Don't:**

- pander to stereotypes by making fun of the name of the disease or the fact it was first identified in Africa.

### **Who is at risk from monkeypox?**

- There is an infection called monkeypox currently circulating in Europe.
- Anyone can catch monkeypox. The virus doesn't care about your gender or sexual orientation.
- That said, the most affected group are currently men who have sex with men.
- Monkeypox is painful and unpleasant, but most people recover after a few weeks.
- However, pregnant women, small children, and people with weakened immune systems can develop severe forms of monkeypox. So, if you have any suspected monkeypox symptoms you need to be particularly careful and avoid contact with these people.

### **How do you catch monkeypox?**

- The main ways in which you can catch monkeypox are:
  - Skin-to-skin contact with someone who has monkeypox;
  - Mouth-to-mouth or mouth-to-skin contact with someone who has monkeypox;
  - Sharing sheets, towels, clothes, or sex toys with someone who has monkeypox.

### **What are the symptoms of monkeypox?**

- The first symptoms of monkeypox are usually fever, muscle aches, fatigue, and swollen lymph nodes.
- At the same time, or shortly after, you usually get a rash that may be painful and itchy.
- The rash can emerge in your mouth, on your hands, your feet, or other areas of your body.
- During this outbreak, the rash has often appeared around the groin or anus.

### **How can you protect others if you have monkeypox symptoms?**

- Take a break from parties, festivals, and events, avoid close contact with others and see your healthcare provider.
- Take a break from sex until you get examined by your healthcare provider.
- Avoid sharing your clothes, towels, or sex toys with others.