Community Support?

Initial response to survey seems strong and enthusiastic

June 1, 1994

Strubco helped develop the home testing questionnaire that was distributed in *POZ* as well as through Community Cardpack and Sapphile (direct response cardpacks sent to a portion of Strubco's mailing list). As a marketing study with a significant portion of its distribution based upon a single database of donors and consumers, the survey is far too unscientific to be used to generalize about either the AIDS community's or the public-at-large's feelings about home testing. The use of the Strubco mailing list probably means the survey reached people who are more aware of AIDS politics and more affluent than the average American. Furthermore, people who would voluntarily answer such a survey are obviously interested by the survey's subject -- a likelihood that was encouraged by the questionnaire's headling, "Help us in the development of a home access HIV test..."

Keeping in mind all these potential biases, some inferences can still be cautiously based on the survey results to date. Response rate was high, with more than 2 percent of the 235,000 questionnaires originally distributed returned by May 1. The people who did respond -- who were overwhelmingly white, gay and male -- were very interested in home testing. 76 percent said it was somewhat or very likely that they would use the test, while 87 percent said it was somewhat or very likely that their friends would use the test. The biggest concern expressed about the test was the test's accuracy (52 percent), ranking ahead of the phone counseling (12 percent) and pricking a finger to administer the test (8 percent). 24 percent said they had no reservations about the test. Respondents indicated the most attractive quality of the test was: convenience (46 percent), privacy (43 percent), anonymity (26 percent), ready availability (22 percent), counseling support (8 percent) and accuracy (4 percent).

More thn one million additional surveys are currently being distributed in a variety of AIDS-affected communities. The next issue of POZ will include further and more comprehensive data from the survey, as well as a detailed analysis of what can or cannot reasonably be interpreted from the results.

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