

### Sensoa and Mpox Lessons learned from fieldworkers

Sciensano Scientific Seminar 11 May 2023

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### Response in phases



Timeline of interventions



Sidenote on stigmatisation

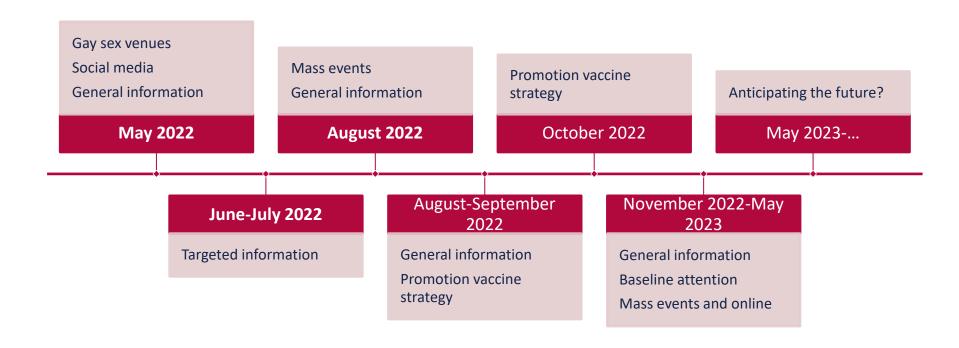


Anticipating the future





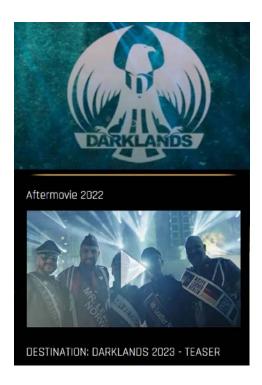
#### Timeline of interventions







### How the virus started and propelled



Monkeypox outbreaks across Europe linked to gay sauna and fetish festival

May 23 2022 • Written by Rachel Badham







### Phase 1: May 2022



Onderstaande adviezen gelden nu voor **homomannen met wisselende seksuele contacten** omdat zij voorlopig het zwaarst getroffen worden:

✓ Informeer je bij een betrouwbare bron, via de website van de Vlaamse overheid.

https://www.allesoverseks.be/hoe-het-risico-op-apenpokken-beperken

- Overweeg je aantal partners te beperken in afwachting van een vaccin. Hoe minder partners, hoe kleiner de kans om het virus tegen te komen.
- Wees aandachtig voor symptomen na een sekscontact en laat je testen als je vermoedt besmet te zijn. Maak daarvoor een afspraak met je huisarts. Ofwel zal die zelf de staalafname doen of je wordt doorverwezen naar een gespecialiseerd ziekenhuis.
- ✓ Onthoud je van nauw fysiek contact in afwachting van de test.
- Isoleer jezelf 2 à 3 weken als je besmet bent. De ziekte geneest spontaan, maar de klachten kunnen zwaar vallen, net als de isolatie na een positieve test.
- Verwittig mensen waar je nauw contact mee had zo snel mogelijk. Je kan dat zelf doen of vraag je arts hoe je dat anoniem via een website kan doen.
- Praat erover. Met je vrienden, je partner(s), je huisarts. Het virus wordt niet alleen seksueel overgedragen, het wordt ook overgedragen door stilzwijgen. Praat er open over met je vaste partner of sekspartners. Dit verkleint het risico.

#### Meer weten of je laten testen?

- Lees de veelgestelde vragen over het apenpokkenvirus op de website van de Vlaamse Overheid
- Je laten testen bij klachten? Neem telefonisch contact met één van deze ziekenhuizen

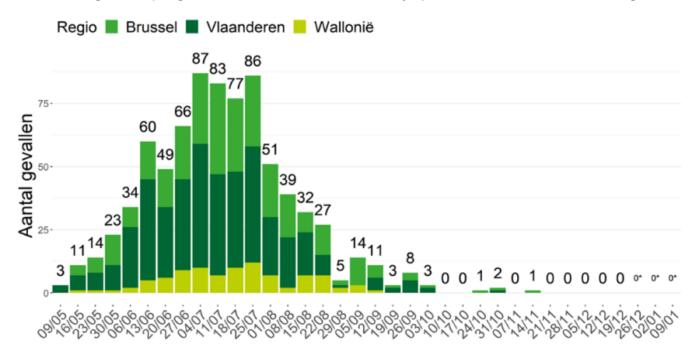
- Flemish Agency Dpt Infectious Disease Control reaching target audience
- Outreach to organizers
   Darklands festival prompting immediate action
- Information on allesoverseks.be and sensoa.be
  - SEO included 'Monkeypox Belgium' and 'Monkeypox homo'
- Informing gay sex venues Flanders
  - > 3 Letters and follow up through field work





### Surveillance snap shot

Aantal gevallen per gewest in functie van de start van symptomen, sedert 10 mei 2022, België







### Phase 2: June-July 2022

#### **Informing MSM**

- 110 Posters and 32.000 cards in gay sex venues
  - > Implementation with field workers MSM
  - > Dissemination plan
- Social media toolkit for influencers (FB, IS, LI, Tw), role models, partnerorganisations, HRCs
- Urgency action Gay cruise: material on board/adapted care

#### **Sharing information**

 Participation in WHO expert sessions and FOD Round Table Mpox, ITM, partner organisations, Flemish Health authorities



#### WEES WAAKZAAM VOOR HET APENPOKKENVIRUS

#### Symptomen? / Signs and symptoms

 Koorts, blaasjes op de huid (vaak bij de penis of billen),
 5-21 dagen na huid-op-huid contact / Fever, blisters on skin (often near genitals and burn),
 5-21 days after skin-on-skin contact

#### Wat doen? / What to do

- Maak een afspraak voor een test bij een gespecialiseerd ziekenhuis / Make an appointment for a test at a specialised hospital (scan QR-code) →
- Vermijd nabij fysiek contact en isoleer jezelf tot de letsels genezen zijn / Avoid close physical contact and isolate yourself until the lesions are cured
- Verwittig je sekscontacten van de voorbije 3 weken / Notify your sex contacts of the past 3 weeks



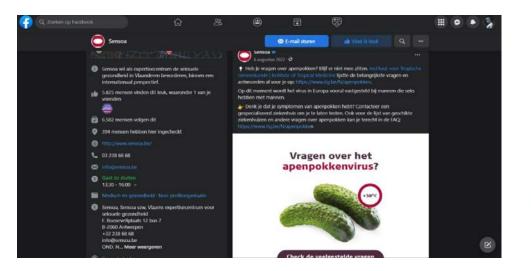








#### Social media toolkit









#### Reach social media

- Instagram posts & stories
  - > 9 posts generating 1100 accounts reached over 2 months
- Twitter (most succesfull tweet)
  - > 4.000 views, 450 interactions
- LinkedIn
  - > 1400 views including 900 unique impressions
- General media (value: 500.000€!)
  - > 33 articles and interviews
  - > Regular news items during peak outbreak





### Phase 3: Antwerp Pride (August 2022)





- Information cards and roll up banner at booth
- Slider on screen in Prideparade
- Referal to ITM and 1700
- All volur ers and staff briefed and ready
- France accelerates vaccination MSM





### Phase 4: August-September 2022



- Posters for general gay venues, LGBT friendly venues in Flanders
- Stickers for general and gay sex venues Flanders venues







### Phase 5: September 2022

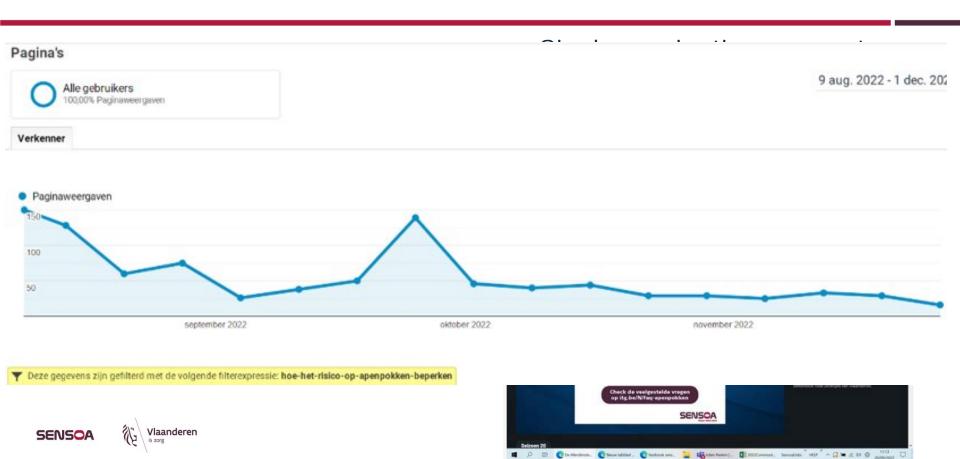


- Promotion of vaccination strategy on social media
  - > 1000 vaccines (conditional on 22/9)
  - > Facebook en LinkedIn
  - > Webpage allesoverseks.be adapted
- Support Brussels MSM partner organisation: Ex Aequo





#### Phase 6: October 2022



### Phase 7: October 2022

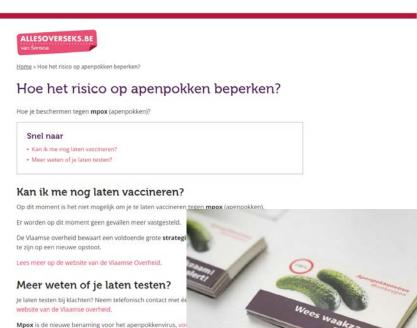






### Phase 8: November 2022-May 2023

- Baseline attention
  - Folders and banners at mass events: Darklands, Mr Bear
  - > Online information on allesoverseks.be
- Preventive vaccination ITM till end 2022
- Monitoring surveillance infor mation after Darklands
- Liaison WHO



Wereldgezondheidsorganisatie.





#### Lessons learned so far



- A government/NGO needs a health crisis plan and a health crisis communication plan (including €)
- Role definition is paramount
- Well embedded NGOs in target audiences are more efficient
- Developing correct information takes time
- Well empowered target audiences get things done
- Make it easy to perform the desired behaviour
- Time consuming for all involved
- HAV, Shigella, Mpox. What's next?





#### What has been learnt?

- Involve community organisation in decision taking/implementation (ex: letter from GP was a terrible idea)
- Community organisation as a direct channel for communication (social networks)
- Use existing professional networks
- Listen to individual stories
- Strengthen bonds between CBOs and hospitals/GPs
- MSM actually trust their CBOs







### What will 2023 bring?



## Public health advice for gatherings during the current monkeypox outbreak

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to provide public health advice to:

- host governments, public health authorities, national or international organizers and professional staff involved in the planning and delivery of gathering events;
- people organizing smaller gatherings or attending gatherings of any size and type.

Information on this outbreak is changing rapidly as we learn more. Check Monkeypox outbreak 2022 - Global (who.int) for the most up to date information.

#### **Background**

■ The unexpected appearance of monkeypox in several WHO regions in the initial absence of epidemiological links to areas that have historically reported monkeypox suggests that there may have been undetected transmission for some time. Epidemiological investigations are ongoing.

#### Risk-based approach for gatherings

#### Principles

- WHO recommends that the decision-making process related to holding, modifying, postponing or cancelling gatherings of any size and type should rely on a risk-based approach, tailored to the characteristics of the event under consideration and be repeated at requiar intervals.
- The risk-based approach entails three steps:
- Risk evaluation: identification and quantification of the baseline risks based on the characteristics of the event and the context in which it takes place;
- <u>Risk mitigation</u>: application of a package of precautionary measures aimed at decreasing the baseline risk;
- Risk communication: proactive dissemination of information on the measures adopted, their rationale and purpose, and on how the relevant decisions were taken.
- In the context of the current outbreak, monkeypox-associated



### Sidenote on stigmatisation

#### **VARIOLE DU SINGE : NE STIGMATISONS PAS LES** HOMMES GAYS ET BISEXUELS

ACCUEIL · SOCIÉTÉ

#### Variole du singe: «Ce virus est lié à une banalisation des rapports sexuels»

Pour l'infectiologue Nathan Clumeck, la pandémie de variole du singe ressemble à celle du sida, mais heureusement elle est moins létale. Pour se propager, le virus profite des comportements à risque, comme la multiplicité des partenaires sexuels. Un véritable travail de prévention est nécessaire et urgent.

Article réservé aux abonnés





Journaliste au service Société Par Anne-Sophie Leurquin

Publié le 3/08/2022 à 06:00 Temps de lecture: 5 min O

🛨 🥊 épidémie de variole du singe a quitté les zones endémiques d'Afrique





INTERVIEWCHRIS LAMBRECHTS EN MARK SERGEANT

#### 'Stigmatisering door apenpokken treft élke homoman'

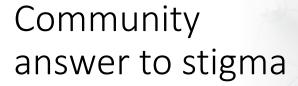
De waarheid verbloemen mag geen optie zijn, vinden Chris Lambrechts en Mark Sergeant van Sensoa. 'Verzwijgen dat mannen die seks hebben met mannen méér geraakt worden door apenpokken, is het tegenovergestelde van wat er moet gebeuren.'

Hilde Van den Eynde Christoph Meeussen

Woensdag 10 augustus 2022 om 3.25 uur



Mark Sergeant (r., naast Chris Lambrechts): 'Onze wagen op de Pride zal onze apenpokken-campagne uitdragen.' © Jimmy Kets



- Reliable information
- Direct contact with the community (newsletters, social networks, dating apps)
- Collaboration with health facilities
- Finding ways around, feedback from the community



# Thank you for your attention and support!

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