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## Rise in HIV cases among gay men

THE number of new cases of HIV and Aids in Singapore fell slightly last year to 454, 15 less than in 2012.

However, the Action for Aids (AfA) group here said there has been a "worrying" rise in infections among homosexual men.

The Ministry of Health revealed the figures yesterday, which also showed that the number of homosexual and bisexual cases has risen from 166 in 2009 to 247 last year.

In contrast, the number of heterosexual men infected fell from 241 to 157.

Around a decade ago, men who contracted

HIV through gay sex accounted for less than 30% of male infections but they now make up more than 60% – making them the main mode of transmission.

A spokesman for AfA said the rise in homosexual HIV transmission could be because people are not as fearful of contracting the infection as previously due to the availability of effective anti-retroviral medication.

The group added that social media has made it easier for people to hook up and reduced the age at which many couples first have intercourse. – The Straits Times / Asia News Network