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## PRESS RELEASE

### Gay Men Give Their Reasons for Safer Sex

London, 23 October 2007 -- In response to GMFA's latest interactive HIV prevention campaign, men from all over London have responded by providing their personal reasons for safer sex. The campaign appeared in gay press and websites and asked guys to get involved by telling GMFA why safer sex was important to them.

"It's always interesting to hear the different personal motivations that people have for maintaining safer sex," said Matthew Hodson, Head of Programmes for GMFA. "Many of the reasons that were given for choosing safer sex were original, varied and well thought out."

In order to encourage guys to enter, the best reasons for safer sex were awarded with a box of mixed condoms and lube, courtesy of Freedoms. With the campaign coming to a close, a selection of some of the best reasons has been posted on GMFA's MySpace site [www.myspace.com/gmfa\\_uk](http://www.myspace.com/gmfa_uk).

"We hope that these reasons, and those featured in the ads, will encourage men to have or keep having safer sex, to help protect them and their partners," added Hodson.

The winning entries include:

- “It's tempting in the heat of the moment, to have unsafe sex. Then I think of how nervous I was the last time I was tested and how I regretted the risks I had taken. When the result came back negative I was so relieved that it made me determined to stay that way.”
- “The gay community's given so much to me. I don't want to put other guys at risk.”
- “I want to have fun and at the same time stay happy and worry free. By wearing a condom and practising safe sex I can make this possible.”
- “My boyfriend, lover and life time partner is HIV positive. I am HIV negative. I want to keep our relationship healthy. I don't want to catch HIV, and don't want him to risk catching anything else from me.”
- “Two pills once a day may sound so easy... until you read the small print: stigma, fear of rejection, being restricted in your ability to travel, diarrhoea, rashes, muscle wasting. Do you need any more reasons for choosing safer sex?”
- “It's simply the sensible thing to do - for me AND my partner.”
- “It may sound easy to forget condoms but it's hard to forget an STI.”
- “Safe Sex is vitally important to me. I am the only person who takes and owns the responsibility of my health and well-being. It is not someone else's problem or concern. Essentially, it is up to me. I want to enjoy sex for many years to come and the only way to ensure I will be able to do this, is to practice safe sex.”

- Ends -

For more information about this or any other of GMFA's campaigns and actions, contact:

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### **Notes to editor:**

#### **About GMFA**

GMFA was established in 1992 and is the UK's leading charity dedicated to gay men's health. GMFA's mission is to improve gay men's health by increasing the control they have over their own lives. We believe that the best health promotion for gay men comes from gay men themselves, and so we use the knowledge and ideas of our 170 volunteers (most of them gay men) to design and plan our thought provoking sexual health interventions. Yearly we deliver three new mass media campaigns in the gay press to disseminate up to date information regarding HIV and STIs to the gay male community. Independent surveys have concluded that our campaigns reach up to 55% of the London gay population and we are the most reliable agency at reaching gay men. In addition to this we distribute our own health magazine, FS, free to London's gay bars and clubs to further educate gay men about relationships, their bodies, general health and STIs. Annually, we deliver 1000 hours of group work to educate gay men in safer sex, and over the last fourteen years have provided courses for over 10,000 gay men. We have recently launched three new websites containing information for gay men on sex and sexual health ([www.gmfa.org.uk/sex](http://www.gmfa.org.uk/sex)), details of sexual health services available for gay men in London ([www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices](http://www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices)) and our guide to gay sports and social groups ([www.gmfa.org.uk/theguide](http://www.gmfa.org.uk/theguide)). Over the next couple of months we will launch a website for HIV positive gay men. All of our sites can be accessed at [www.gmfa.org.uk](http://www.gmfa.org.uk).