“Girl talk” for PrEP: Envisioning Black beauty salons as a setting for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) interventions

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Figure 3B. Rates of HIV Diagnoses among Adult/Adolescent Females by Race/Ethnicity¹, Los Angeles County, 2006-2015

[Diagram showing trends in HIV diagnosis rates among different racial/ethnic groups from 2006 to 2015.]
Beauty Salons: A Promising Health Promotion Setting for Reaching and Promoting Health Among African American Women

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Objectives

Use qualitative interviews to explore Black female cosmetologists’ and estheticians’:

• Thoughts, feelings, and actions during their conversations with clients regarding dating and sex
• Awareness and acceptability of PrEP
• Acceptability of a PrEP-related intervention within the Black beauty salon environment
Methods

- Convenience & snowball sampling
- Semi-structured interviews
- Data collection & analysis: Constructivist Grounded Theory

Cyclical process:

1. Data collection
2. Coding
3. Theoretical sampling
4. Theory
Results: Sample characteristics

N = 16 Black women interviewed in LA County

Median age: 41 years

Median number of clients seen per week per interviewee: 25

14 (82%) had health insurance

14 (82%) had a regular doctor

13 (76%) had heard of PrEP
Preliminary findings: situation specific theory
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Building relationships with clients

- Playing different roles
- Laying a foundation of trust
- Carefully tailoring advice
Preliminary findings: situation specific theory

Building relationships with clients

Playing different roles

Carefully tailoring advice

Laying a foundation of trust

Weighing views on PrEP
Preliminary findings: situation specific theory

Building relationships with clients
- Playing different roles
- Carefully tailoring advice
- Laying a foundation of trust

Weighing views on PrEP

Envisioning interventions in the salon
- PrEP
- Condoms/Other
Building relationships with clients: Playing different roles

“I could be a **mother** to the younger ones, a **mentor**. I could be a **sister** to my peers. Like a play daughter to the older clients. I really just kind of take on the **role** of whatever the client needs me to be at the time.”

(Cosmetologist, age 41)

"I can be a bit of a **counselor/motivator/homegirl**, like some of everything.“ (Cosmetologist, age 33)
Building relationships with clients: Laying a foundation of trust

“I'm like, come to me with anything. I'm not going to be mad at you, we'll talk it through. I think when they know that you’re an open person and you're not going to judge them, they're easier to confide in you.” (Cosmetologist, age 46)
Weighing views on PrEP: Support

“I feel as though it’s necessary. However, I really feel—maybe this is like my religious views—that people should have enough willpower to not engage in unprotected risky sex. But, the reality is that people don’t. Like, they still engage in those things.”

(Esthetician, age 30)
Weighing views on PrEP: Ambivalence

“How do I feel about it now? **If it works, it works.** ... That's how I feel about it. But do I know if it works or not? No. So I have no judgment on it right now. ... **it would have to be a study** between ... a lady wants to date a guy that has HIV. Or a guy wants to date a girl that has HIV.” (Cosmetologist, age 38)
Envisioning interventions in the salon: PrEP

“I feel like we're counselors. ...So if you're giving advice, why not give educated advice? We talk about everything. So why not be like, ‘Girl. This is what I know about this, and this is how you should...[etc]’” (Cosmetologist, age 33)
Envisioning interventions in the salon: Condoms

“I'd rather advise her to get **condoms and spermicide** than to take a pill that you don't know 10 years down the road, because you'll be blind or ... you got liver failure ... I'm not so much for the pharmaceutical drugs.” (Cosmetologist, age 46)
Envisioning interventions in the salon: General

“I would have to agree with what they're saying, because I'm the kind of person, I'm not for bringing somebody together to listen to somebody else's BS. But I am for truly educating people about their health. If it is something that is [based on] actual good motive and there's nothing behind it that is soliciting other things, I am always down for that.”

(Cosmetologist, age 28)
Conclusions

• Cosmetologists & estheticians make a careful effort to building relationships with their clients
  • This makes them trusted advisors & valuable resources in future interventions

• Their views on PrEP influence their visions of interventions
  • Range: PrEP-centered ↔ behavioral ↔ wholistic

• There is no one-size-fits-all intervention for PrEP within the Black beauty salon
Next Steps

• Analyze views on specific interventions
  • Including telehealth
• Gather viewpoints from Black women regarding preferences for PrEP information/access in nonclinical settings
• Develop beauty salon intervention
Thank you!

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