



What's Missing? Investigating the Gaps between PrEP Knowledge, Eligibility, and Utilization Among At-Risk Youth



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BACKGROUND

- Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has been shown to be highly effective in preventing HIV infection when used as prescribed; however, PrEP uptake among high-risk youth has been suboptimal.
- Many public health interventions have focused on raising awareness of PrEP, particularly among high-risk groups, including youth at risk for HIV.

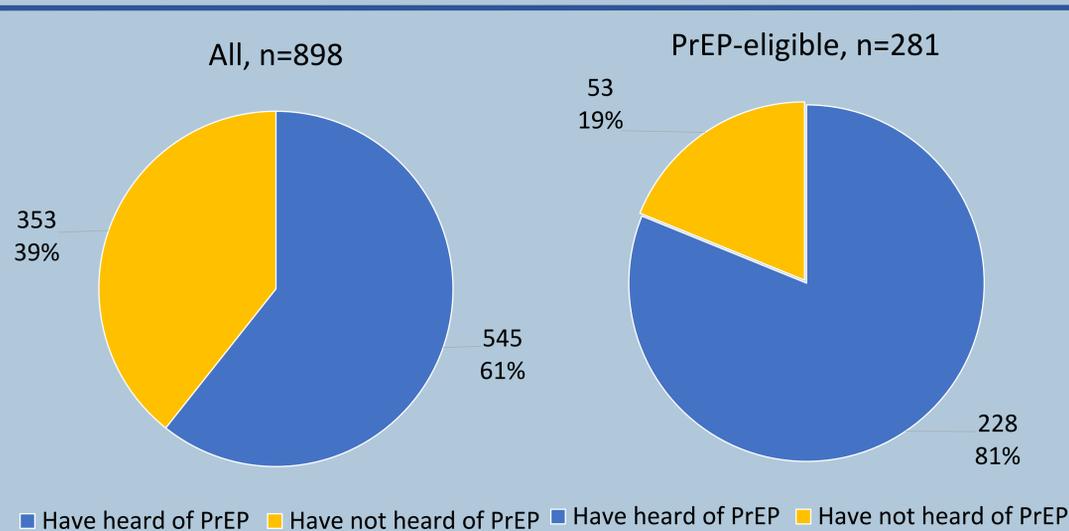
METHODS

- Data from the Adolescent Trials Network Comprehensive Adolescent Recruitment and Engagement Studies (ATN CARES) research project were used to evaluate prevalence of PrEP knowledge, PrEP use, and PrEP eligibility among youth at risk for HIV.
- Youth ages 12-24 were recruited in Los Angeles and New Orleans from homeless shelters, LGBTQIA+ organizations, community health centers, and social media. Recruitment began May 2017.
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health guidelines were used to determine PrEP eligibility.

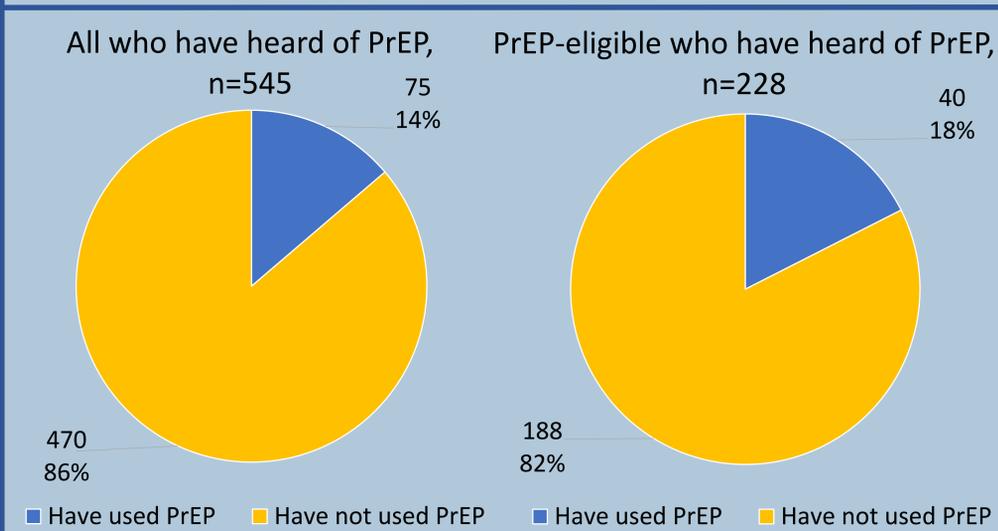
RESULTS

- Of 898 HIV-negative participants who completed a baseline questionnaire, 545 (60.7%) had heard of PrEP but only 75 (13.7%) of those who had heard of PrEP reported having used it in their lifetime.
- 281 of these participants were determined to be eligible for PrEP based on Los Angeles County guidelines. Of those 281 PrEP-eligible individuals, 228 (81.1%) had heard of PrEP but only 40 (17.5%) of those who had heard of PrEP reported having used PrEP in their lifetime.

PrEP Awareness:



PrEP Utilization:



CONCLUSIONS

- Though PrEP awareness was relatively high among these 898 youth at high risk of HIV infection, particularly among the 281 youth who were PrEP-eligible, reported PrEP utilization was far lower in both groups.
- These results suggest that awareness of PrEP is not enough, and that further action must be taken to address other factors, like PrEP access and attitudes, that may contribute to youths' low rate of uptake of PrEP for HIV prevention.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was funded by the Adolescent Trials Network for HIV/AIDS Interventions from NICHD (NIH grant U19HD089886), with support from the Center for HIV Identification, Prevention, and Treatment (CHIPTS) NIMH grant MH58107; the UCLA Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) grant 5P30AI028697; and the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences through UCLA CSTI Grant UL1TR000124.