

A Trust-Building Intervention to Help Address Critical HIV Outcomes

*Justicia Une a Nuestras Mujeres Trans y Oficiales de Policías Hacia la Salud
JUNTOS*

Justice Unites our Trans Women and Police Officers Toward Health
TOGETHER

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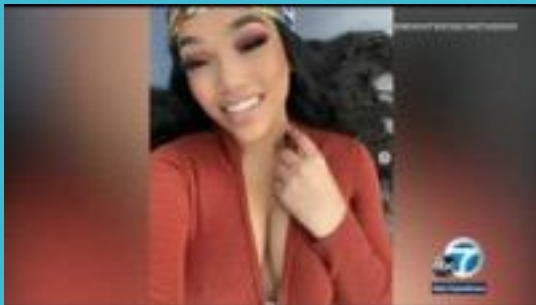
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RAND Corporation



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Transgender Women and the Los
Angeles Police Department

Background



- HIV-related inequities affect Latinx communities, especially Latina transgender women (LTGW)
- LTGW experience high levels of violence, stigma, and discrimination, which may lead to increased HIV risk behaviors
- In the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, among respondents identifying as Latino/a,
 - 48% reported being sexually assaulted in their lifetime
 - 12% reported being sexually assaulted in the past year
 - **59% said they would feel somewhat or very uncomfortable asking the police for help**
- Not seeking or receiving support after trauma exacerbates negative physical and mental health outcomes generally, and HIV-related outcomes specifically

Study Goal & Methods

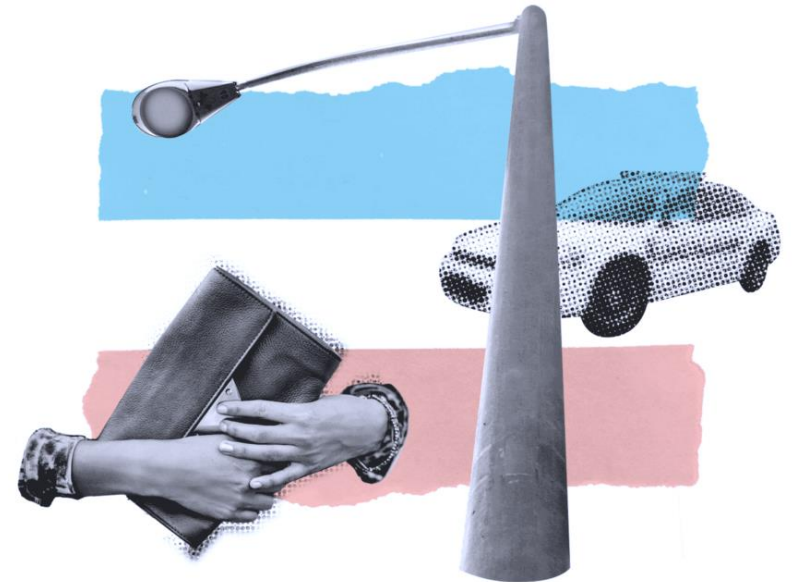
- Study Goal: To develop an intervention to increase trust between law enforcement and LTGW, and improve HIV-related outcomes, using community-based participatory research methods
 - LTGW identified need for such an intervention, developed by LTGW for LTGW
- Conducting qualitative semi-structured interviews with 15 LTGW and 5 law enforcement stakeholders (from the LAPD)
 - 16 interviews completed so far (with 11 LTGW and 5 LAPD)
- Qualitative content analysis will be used to allow for themes about potential intervention components to emerge through a bottom-up, iterative coding process
- Qualitative results will be presented at a one-day structured community workshop in March 2021 with LTGW and LAPD participants, to develop the intervention using a participatory engagement process

Preliminary Results: Potential Intervention Components

- Include relevant topics in law enforcement training
 - Respect
 - Empathy
 - Safety
 - Profiling
- Link LTGW to resources through law enforcement
 - Legal services
 - Basic needs (e.g., housing, organizations known to hire LTGW)
 - Mental health and substance use services
 - Mechanisms for reporting hate crimes (including policies– “how are hate crimes defined”)
 - Linkage to HIV prevention & treatment (PrEP and PEP)
 - Formal systems offering support to LTGW found to be doing sex work (e.g., sex work diversion program)
 - (“police officers can’t do it all alone, community organizations and law enforcement can support court referrals...”)*
- Create spaces for positive interactions between LTGW + LAPD, to build trust
 - LAPD present at transgender focused community meetings and events
 - LTGW volunteering at police stations
 - LTGW participating in officer trainings (testimonials)

Preliminary Results: Quotes

*"I have lost trust; I feel like they're not going to help. They don't arrive on time and I feel discriminated because they see that I am transgender. And they see we're not all the same... a lot of police officers think that a lot of transgenders are on drugs and crazy, and they're the worst ...and not all of them [transgender women] are the same. I am a transgender woman that isn't a prostitute, I have a clean record, I like to work and study, I treat people with respect, but I don't feel safe if I call the police because I feel like they won't help me because of my identity and gender. I don't have trust anymore... the experiences that I have had, I feel sad about them. **But I would like for all police departments to take into account all cases because the harm that is done is so big that we are the victims of violence and discrimination...** both them [police officers] and the aggressors who attack us and give us psychological harm." (46 year-old Mexican LTGW)*





- *"We don't know what we don't know in law enforcement.. **We need to take steps to bring light to the problem** (s)."* (LAPD Officer)
- *"**We need to know what the community needs from us...**"* (LAPD officer)
- *"**We need to build trust...** get to know each other."* (LAPD officer)



In summary, all participants said a program to improve relationships between LTGW and police officers is "**very important and necessary**"... *"change is needed to improve"*

- End stereotypes ("**not all transgender women are doing sex work**"; "**not all police officers are bad**")
 - Not to generalize...get to know who we are, not all transgender women are hair stylist, sex workers...
- Come together- Build Trust → **get to know each other** (e.g., socials, community meetings, listening during encounters)
 - **Deeper understanding**– know the struggles, where they come from
 - Gain trust– that I'll come to help not to investigate you
 - Provide **connection** to resources
- Beyond training– "**exposure**"



Discussion

LAPD + TRANS WOMEN *Community Forum*



Photo: Long Beach Pride 2018 (Law Enforcement and Allies)

ASK QUESTIONS
AND OFFER
SUGGESTIONS

BIENESTAR (ELA)
5326 E. BEVERLY BLVD,
LOS ANGELES 90022

TUESDAY
AUGUST 21ST
4:00 - 6:00 PM

For more information, call (866)590-6411 ext. 402



Proposed Intervention Components

- Create safe spaces to build trust and mutual empathy
 - Direct
 - LAPD + LGBTQ Safety
 - Community forums/meetings
 - LAPD town halls
 - Training program (e.g., LTGW presenting at officer trainings)
 - Indirect
 - Testimonials about each other's daily lives and experiences with each other
 - Using videos
 - Police ride-alongs and simulation exercises
- Develop trainings for law enforcement to know how to respond to the needs of LTGW appropriately (upholding respect and demonstrating empathy) and connecting them to the help they (may) need
 - Officers to use referral card
 - Connect LTGW to local supportive resources (known to be LGBT friendly, if available)

Discussion



- After a traumatic experience, victims should feel comfortable reporting the assault to law enforcement
 - **JUNTOS aims to improve:**
 - **Mental health** (e.g., through increased help-seeking, quality social support, and likelihood/comfort reporting crimes)
 - **HIV-related health behaviors** (e.g., retention in preventive care, medication adherence)
- Law enforcement should have access to local linkage to care resources and/or counsel LTGW on the importance of following up with their provider
 - Recent trauma is associated with antiretroviral failure; thus, the role of law enforcement responding to any traumatic experience/event faced by LTGW is key to continued retention in care and ultimately, achievement of viral suppression



Future Directions

- Information from the qualitative interviews and the feedback/evaluation forms from the one-day structured community workshop will be used to draft an intervention protocol for pilot testing (R21)
 - Will continue involving community and stakeholders in research
 - Will include other law enforcement departments

Questions/Comments

Thank You!

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