Using An Interactive Systems Approach With Community Organizing To Improve PrEP Reach Among Cisgender Women In Metro Atlanta

3rd National Ending the HIV Epidemic Partnerships for Research Meeting
April 15-16, 2024 | Los Angeles, CA

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Disclosures

• I have nothing to disclose

• Funding support:
  • 1-year EHE Supplement (2019-2020); MPIs: Sales, J. & Sheth, A.
  • R01 MH128045 (2021-2026); MPIs: Sales, J & Sheth, A.

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**Background**

**Jurisdiction:** 4 Metro Atlanta, GA EHE counties: Gwinnett, Cobb, Fulton, DeKalb

**Priority population:** Cisgender women

**Public health context:**
- ~20% of new HIV diagnoses are among women; majority of newly diagnosed women live in the South
- PrEP is grossly underutilized by women across all regions, but especially in the Southeastern US

**Key challenges:**
- Women’s health care providers aren’t providing PrEP (supply challenge)
- Women don’t know about PrEP (demand challenge)

**GOAL:** Mount a coordinated, collaborative approach to sustainably address the supply and demand constraints for scaling and reaching cisgender women with PrEP in Metro Atlanta
Partnering with Community

Collaborating organizations:

*SisterLove* is an Atlanta-based women’s HIV and reproductive justice community-based organization.

**Georgia Family Planning System (GFPS)**, is the GA Title X grant recipient that as of 2022, provided funds to 31 sites across the four EHE counties in Atlanta.

Community engagement strategy:

- GFPS – facilitated access to clinics; collaborated to make trainings
- SisterLove – led listening sessions with other CBOs to develop partnerships for community organizing
Approach

Addressing Supply
Determine current practices & training needs in Title X clinics

- Conducted 15 focus group discussions with 195 providers, staff, and administrators from 25 Title X clinics
- Developed menu of PrEP trainings, technical assistant protocols, and resources

Addressing Demand
Build community partnerships to reach diverse communities of women

- Held a series of community meetings led by SisterLove, to build collaborations with other CBOs
- Identified 4 CBOs across Metro Atlanta interested in participating in the PrEP focused community organizing
Outcomes and Local EHE Impact

**Implementing Prevention – Prevention Delivery System:**
Implements the innovation (i.e., HIV testing/PrEP/PEP) in real world settings

- Adopts CDC-recommended HIV testing practices (i.e., universal, opt-out testing)
- Adopts PrEP/PEP implementation plans that fit organization

**Supporting the work – Prevention Support System:**
Provides technical assistance, training, or other support to users in the field

- General HIV-related capacity building (i.e., training/capacity building on HIV testing practices)
- Innovation-specific intervention capacity building (i.e., trainings on PrEP/PEP implementation)

**Distilling Information – Prevention Synthesis and Translation System:**
Distills information about innovations and translates to user-friendly formats

- Synthesis of research and best practices on HIV testing/PrEP/PEP
- Translation of best practices on HIV/PrEP/PEP for real world use: By consumers, CBOs and providers/clinics

**SisterLove**

**Community Organizing:**
Creates testing/PrEP/PEP demand, reduces stigma, HIV advocacy
Developed all trainings/resources and trained GFPS to provide them to their network (sustainability)

Thus far, provided trainings in 21 Metro clinics, reaching ~375 providers/staff
Based on community input, with community we created content for informal community health education events called “Healthy Love Parties”

Assembled and trained 2 cohorts of “Action Team Members” = 32 community influencers, organizers and leaders across Metro Atlanta to host parties – events started in December (10 to date; 6 scheduled with many, many more to come)
Generalizable Lessons Learned

• The interactive system approach allows for a scalable, sustainable solution to supporting clinics to implement new practices, especially in environments where there is an established entity responsible for the training needs of clinics (e.g., the Title X program, the Ryan White Program)

• This approach could be used in other jurisdictions, but agencies engaged must come to a mutual understanding of the role each agency plays in the process (e.g., written scope of work for each group that is discussed and agreed upon)

• Relationship building and garnering buy-in takes time, trust, and accountability – this approach has worked for us because:
  • Are willing to commit for the long-term
  • Show up for each other
  • Evaluate, share back progress and pain points, and willing to continually improve