



National Gay Men's HIV/AIDS Awareness Day September 27, 2016

Research and Resources
with Gay Men



Center for AIDS Prevention Studies (CAPS) UCSF Prevention Research Center (PRC)

Research & Resources

This brochure lists research projects with gay men and helpful resources produced by CAPS/PRC. You might use it to:

- Stay up-to-date on research and learn what we found out from research
- Provide materials in trainings/presentations
- Advocate for services/funding
- Write grants
- Develop new or modify existing HIV prevention programs
- Evaluate current programs
- Connect with CAPS/PRC to develop new projects. Lead researchers (PIs) are listed for each study. Contact us below to connect.

Questions? Comments? Contact Daryl Mangosing at 415-514-4590 or Daryl.Mangosing@ucsf.edu

This brochure was prepared by the CAPS **Community Engagement (CE) Core**, which is previously known as the *Technology and Information Exchange (TIE) Core*.

Acronyms

MSM: Men who have sex with men

PI: Principal Investigator (lead researcher on the study)

African American

We Are Family: Testing, Linkage and Engagement in Care among African American Gay, Bisexual, and Trans youth in the House Ball Community

Investigators: Emily Arnold (PI), Parya Saberi, Susan Kegeles, Torsten Neilands, Lance Pollack, Michael Benjamin (CAL-PEP), Felicia Bridges (CAL-PEP), and Gloria Lockett (CAL-PEP)

This is a newly funded 4-year study supported by the California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP) to develop intervention activities that build upon forms of social support already occurring among young people involved in the house ball and gay family communities, specifically related to HIV prevention and care. This is a collaboration between UCSF, CAL-PEP, and members of the house ball and gay family communities.

Home Testing Among Young, African American Gay, Bisexual, & other MSM

Investigators: Greg Rebchook (PI), Susan Kegeles, John Peterson (Georgia State University), David Huebner (George Washington University)

Encouraging young, African American gay, bisexual, and other MSM (YAAMSM) to know their current HIV status in order to reduce the number of undiagnosed HIV cases is an important part of the National HIV/AIDS strategy, but little data exist about YAAMSM's experience with and attitudes toward home testing. To address this knowledge gap, we conducted an evaluation of an Mpowerment Project adapted for YAAMSM in Texas to learn more about their experience with and attitudes towards home testing for HIV.

Given the strong interest in home testing as an option for YAAMSM, the HIV prevention workforce should consider developing strategies to make home testing more widely available and affordable.

Research finding: *Among the HIV-negative or status unknown participants, 61% said that they are either extremely likely or somewhat likely to use a home kit in the future. Home testing use increased significantly from 19% in '13 to 27.5% in '14.*

A Community-Level HIV Prevention Intervention for Young Black MSM

Investigators: Susan Kegeles (PI); John Peterson (Georgia State University, Co-PI); Greg Rebchook (Co-PI); David Huebner (University of Maryland, Co-investigator)

This project involves adapting the Mpowerment Project for young Black MSM in Texas and testing its efficacy in reducing sexual risk behavior and increasing HIV testing. The adapted project is called United Black Ellument. The adapted intervention was first implemented in Dallas, and then it was implemented in Houston. The project also involves a qualitative study of young Black MSM who are being followed over several years to see the issues that they face within HIV prevention efforts.



Photo: United Black Ellument

Community Mobilization to Improve the HIV/AIDS Continuum of Care Among Young Black Gay Men

Investigators: Susan Kegeles (PI), Greg Rebchook (Co-PI), John Peterson (Georgia State University), David Huebner (George Washington University)

This project involves using a community empowerment and mobilization approach to help and motivate young black men who are living with HIV to engage in care and take ART medications regularly. This includes adapting the Mpowerment Project so that it focuses, in addition to risk reduction and HIV testing, on helping men deal with internalized and external HIV stigma, support men living with HIV to get support from friends in their social networks, and increase HIV treatment literacy.

The Bruthas Project: Sexual Health Promotion Counseling Sessions

Investigators: Emily Arnold (Academic PI), Gloria Lockett (Community PI), Susan Kegeles, Don Operario (Brown University), Tor Neilands, Lance Pollack, and Stephanie Cornwell (CAL-PEP)

African American men who have sex with men and women (AAMSMW) are at high risk for acquiring and transmitting HIV, but few interventions exist to address their prevention needs. To address this, we developed the Bruthas Project, a series of four individualized sexual health promotion counseling sessions designed to build upon standardized HIV counseling and testing (HIV-CT) with the following goals: 1) increase comfort with one's personal identity, 2) build safer sex and sexual communication skills, and 3) increase regular HIV testing for men who are negative.

With data analysis and manuscripts in progress, the intervention will reach a vulnerable population to encourage uptake of regular HIV testing and reduced sexual risk taking if Bruthas is found to be effective.

International

Multilevel HIV Prevention Intervention with MSM in Peru

Investigators: Susan Kegeles, Carlos Caceres (Cayetano Heredia University, Peru)

This project seeks to implement and test a multi-level HIV prevention intervention (Proyecto Orgullo or Project Pride) for MSM and transgender women focusing on the full HIV Continuum of Prevention and Care. It focuses on community mobilization and empowerment around sexual risk reduction, HIV testing, helping gay men and transgender women living with HIV to engage in care, and working with the health system to increase focus on prevention with people living with HIV. This includes treatment as prevention and sensitization of the staff to work with gay men and transgender women. This "combination intervention" addresses individual, interpersonal, social and structural level issues.

Self-testing with MSM in South Africa

Investigators: Sheri Lippman (PI), Timothy Lane, James McIntyre and Oscar Radebe (Anova Health)

MSM in South Africa do not currently utilize clinic-based HIV testing at a rate commensurate with their risk. We are exploring whether self-testing will be used by South African MSM; how, when, where, what kind, and with whom self-tests are utilized; how sexual risk behaviors may be modified by introducing self-test kits into this community; and strategies to ensure linkage to care following self-testing in this underserved and high risk population. We recruited from the high prevalence Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni districts.

HIV Prevention with Gay Men in the Middle East

Investigators: Glenn Wagner (PI) (Rand); Mathew Mutchler (Cal State Dominguez Hills); Susan Kegeles (PI of subcontract, CAPS)

This project is the first intervention to address HIV prevention with gay men in Lebanon, and likely the first in the Middle East. The project involves formative, qualitative research with gay men in Beirut; and collaborating with a community working group in developing this adaptation.

We will then implement the program in Beirut and assess it for evidence of efficacy in reducing sexual risk and increasing HIV testing.

Couples

DuoPACT: A couples-based approach to improving engagement in HIV care

Investigators: Mallory Johnson (PI); Adam Carrico, Monica Gandhi, Tor Neilands (Co-Is)

DuoPACT is a randomized controlled trial comparing virologic outcomes of HIV serodiscordant and seroconcordant positive couples randomized to a couple-level intervention or to an individual intervention.

Research finding: *Social support, particularly in the context of primary romantic relationships, has consistently been documented as a predictor of health behaviors, including adherence to care for HIV and other conditions. As such, couples-based interventions have the potential to create a lasting effect on engagement in HIV care, uptake and adherence to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV prevention, and other health behaviors among MSM in primary relationships with other men.*

General

MSM Self-Testing Project

Investigators: Marguerita Lightfoot, Sheri Lippman, Nicholas Moss (Alameda County Department of Public Health)

The overall study aims to enhance identification of undiagnosed HIV infection and increase linkage to HIV care among African American and Latino gay and other men who have sex with men in Alameda County. The proposed intervention leverages a new technology, HIV self-testing, to increase testing among under-diagnosed African American and Latino MSM. We have enlisted recruiters to ask 5 peers they believe to be sexually active to complete a HIV self-test. The use of peer-driven HIV self-testing has the potential to reach young MSM who don't normally test.

Technology to Connect At-Risk Youth to Testing

Investigator: Marguerita Lightfoot

A potential vehicle for outreach to adolescents is socially interactive technologies (e.g., text messages). The goal of the Technology to Connect At-Risk Youth to Testing Project is to: 1) develop protocols and a theory-informed message guide for a peer-driven text message intervention for adolescents recruited from an adolescent health clinic, 2) examine the acceptability and feasibility of sending text messages related to obtaining HIV/STI testing, and 3) examine the efficacy of a youth generated messaging intervention to increase the number of high-risk youth seeking services and clinic volume. If successful, the youth generated text messages will encourage their friends to visit the clinic and get tested.

The CRUSH: Connecting Resources for Urban Sexual Health

Investigator: Janet Myers

Due to the local HIV/AIDS epidemic in Alameda County among young MSM, the overall goal of the CRUSH project is to demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of integrating and implementing comprehensive sexual health services within a youth clinic to support HIV prevention and care engagement.

Specifically, the study seeks to enhance the services provided by an existing model program for HIV-infected youth to strengthen linkage and retention in HIV care. Utilizing a broad range of scientific and community partners, patients can arrive for scheduled or drop-in visits, receive regular HIV testing, and much more. Website: www.CRUSH510.org



Photo: CRUSH

Replicating STYLE: Strength Through Youth Livin' Empowered

Investigators: Greg Rebchook (PI), Janet Myers, Susan Kegeles, Emily Arnold (Co-Is), Reverend Rob Newells (AIDS Project of the East Bay)

This project is adapting and replicating STYLE in Oakland, CA with Black and Latino gay, bisexual, and other MSM who are living with HIV. STYLE is an evidence-based intervention that has been shown to improve engagement in healthcare among of young MSM of color living with HIV.



Photo: STYLE

ANCHOR Study: Anal Cancer HSHIL (high-grade squamous intraepithelial lesions) Outcomes Research

Project Staff: Nicolas Sheon (Recruitment and Retention) and Bob Siedle-Khan (Clinical Research Coordinator)

Anal cancer is rising among people living with HIV, who are at least 80 times more at risk of developing anal cancer than people without HIV. Launched in 2015, the ANCHOR study aims to find the best way to prevent anal cancer, which is caused by Human Papillomavirus or HPV, by testing whether removing the HPV-damaged cells works like it does for cervical cancer. The 8-year study involves 5,058 participants, each coming in for a total of 11-21 visits, depending whether they are in the group who will have their HPV-damaged cells removed (experimental) or the group whose cells will not be removed (control).

Distribution of HIV Self-Testing Kits in a Gay Bathhouse Setting

Investigators: William Woods, Sheri Lippman, Diane Binson

Gay bathhouses have been a venue where a high proportion of non-testers can be found, and bathhouse-based HIV testing programs usually operate only a few hours a week at best and only reach a limited number of men per hour of operation. To determine whether a HIV self-testing kit distribution program could reach those who never tested or who are infrequent testers and to characterize the testing behavior of those who accepted self-test kits, we distributed free OraQuick In-home HIV Test® kits to men at a gay bathhouse. Men were systematically selected to receive a coupon, which could be redeemed that night for a HIV self-testing kit.

Research finding: *Men who had never tested or who last tested more than 6 months ago were among those most likely to take the free test kit. We found that bathhouse distribution could reach a MSM population most in need of improved access to HIV testing.*



Policy

BloodDROPS: Blood Donors Opinions and Perspectives Study

Investigator: Nicolas Sheon

The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) "donor deferral" policy has amounted to a lifetime ban on blood donation by the same generation of MSM who advocated safer sex practices and voluntary HIV testing. BloodDROPS aimed to find out the prevalence of MSM who donate blood, their views on donor deferral, and potential changes to the deferral policy.

Research finding: *Based on data spanning from focus groups and qualitative interviews with MSM donors and online surveys, the researchers found a high prevalence of MSM behavior (2.6%) among recent male donors. MSM viewed the ban as stigmatizing and homophobic and that any MSM-specific donor deferral should be eliminated, because all donations are screened for HIV anyway.*

Blood Centers of the Pacific (BCP) Staff Study on MSM Donation

Investigators: Nicolas Sheon and Shana Hughes

This project aimed to understand BCP employees' experiences and opinions regarding blood donation by and deferral of MSM and served as an information gathering response to the FDA's December 2014 decision to modify the policy of indefinite deferral of donors reporting MSM contact since 1977 to a 12-month deferral.

Research finding: *Based on individual BCP staff interviews, the majority of them identified challenges and expressed a desire for training on the implementation of the new policy, both to improve potential donors' experiences and to strengthen their own confidence in representing BCP as well.*

CAPS/PRC Resources

Research and publications with gay men:

<http://caps.ucsf.edu/research/current-research-projects#2>

Fact Sheets: www.caps.ucsf.edu/pubs/FS/

- What are men who have sex with men (MSM)'s HIV prevention needs?
<http://caps.ucsf.edu/archives/factsheets/gay-men-msm>
- What are the HIV prevention needs of young men who have sex with men?
<http://caps.ucsf.edu/archives/factsheets/young-gay-men>
- What are Black men's HIV prevention needs?
<http://caps.ucsf.edu/archives/factsheets/black-men>
- What are transgender men's HIV prevention needs?
<http://caps.ucsf.edu/archives/factsheets/transgender-men>

Survey Instruments & Scales: www.caps.ucsf.edu/resources/survey-instruments

- Topics include counseling and testing, healthcare providers, risk behavior, adherence, coping, substance use and knowledge/attitudes.

Evaluation Manuals: www.caps.ucsf.edu/resources/how-to-manuals

- Good Questions Better Answers: A Formative Research Handbook for California HIV Prevention Programs
- Working Together: A Guide to Collaborative Research in HIV Prevention

Intervention Curricula: www.caps.ucsf.edu/resources/intervention-curricula

- Programs for HIV+ and HIV- persons.

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