

Reducing New Infections in the NW Province of South Africa

PI: Sheri Lippman, PhD, MPH

Co-Investigators: Starley Shade PhD, MPH, Lynae Darbes PhD, Steve Morin PhD

Project Description

South Africa is the country most impacted by HIV in the world—of 49 million people, 5.6 million are infected with HIV. In 2011 the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) responded to the epidemic crisis by stepping up prevention partnerships across South Africa through support for comprehensive HIV/TB prevention programs. The International Training and Education Center for Health in South Africa (I-TECH) was awarded funds to partner with the North West Province Department of Health (NWDOH), Empowerment Concepts, the University of California San Francisco's Center for AIDS Prevention Studies, LifeLine and Soul City to develop, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive HIV prevention program in the province. Comprehensive prevention packages incorporate biomedical, behavioral and structural interventions, recognizing there is no silver bullet to prevent HIV but "that the optimal set of interventions implemented with quality and to scale can significantly reduce HIV incidence."

UCSF has supported this work by conducting a situational analysis, to tailor the programming to the local context; providing technical assistance in programming components; creating an infrastructure for community engagement through community working groups; supporting quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation; and leading an impact assessment of the project.

Significance

With an estimated 380,000 new HIV infections each year, South Africa's HIV epidemic remains the world's largest. With the HIV and TB co-epidemics still rampant despite years of prevention efforts, South Africa has embraced a more comprehensive approach to prevention. This project supports a comprehensive HIV prevention project in North West province that includes community based health services, support groups from HIV positive community members, health systems strengthening and community mobilization.