

HIV Prevention for Middle Adulthood Gay Men: A Formative Research Project

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Project Description

We are conducting an exploratory, qualitative study of middle-adulthood gay and bisexual men, ages 30-49. The study's objective is to identify the significant psychosocial needs of gay and bisexual men in middle adulthood that might be addressed as part of a culturally grounded, targeted HIV-prevention effort.

We will recruit 15 to 25 men from community venues in the San Francisco Bay area known to be frequented by gay and bisexual men such as bars, clubs, parks, gyms, cafés, and the Internet. Volunteers will be invited to participate in a two-hour qualitative interview, during which we will elicit their personal narratives as gay and bisexual men and as members of society. Some participants will also be selected to participate in two focus group discussions.

Significance

Recent HIV seroincidence data from the CDC have demonstrated that middle adulthood (ages 30-49) MSM account for the majority of new HIV infections in the US. While Black MSM and Latino MSM bear a disproportionate burden of HIV, white MSM account for close to half of new infections. Among white MSM, new infections most commonly occur in those aged 30-39, closely followed by those aged 40-49. Local San Francisco data among MSM also indicate that many men in their 30s and 40s are being diagnosed with HIV and AIDS.

Little research has been conducted about MSM in the middle adulthood years, and no age-specific, evidence-based interventions exist for these men who account for the majority of new infections among all MSM. HIV-prevention programs are effective when they link HIV prevention to the fulfillment of the target population's other, more pressing needs. Unfortunately, little is known about the needs of middle adulthood gay and bisexual men.

National, state, and local HIV-prevention efforts have been initiated and renewed to address the disparities among racial groups and the high rates of infections among young MSM of color. Relatively little research and age-specific HIV prevention programming have been devoted to MSM in the middle adulthood years who actually account for the majority of new infections among all MSM.

Project Recruitment Dates: Spring, Summer, Fall 2009

Project End Date: Spring 2010