

A Randomized Controlled Trial of the Bruthas Program

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This study is a randomized controlled trial of the Bruthas Program, an enhanced HIV counseling intervention, which involves HIV counseling and testing (HIV-CT) plus a series of individual sexual health promotion counseling sessions. The Bruthas Program will be compared to a standard program involving HIV counseling, testing and referral to general case management services. The enhanced counseling intervention sessions will address: (a) increasing comfort with one's personal identity, (b) building safer sex skills, and (c) increasing regular HIV testing for men who are negative. A sample of 400 African American MSMW who do not identify as gay will be recruited from the San Francisco Bay Area. After receiving HIV counseling and testing, half will be randomly assigned to the enhanced intervention condition and half randomly assigned to the standard program. All participants will complete baseline, 6 month follow up, and 9 month follow up behavioral risk assessments using an audio computer-assisted interview. A subset of participants will also complete post-intervention qualitative interviews to provide in-depth experiential insight into the intervention process. The effectiveness of the enhanced counseling intervention will be evaluated by the primary outcome, which is the reduction of sexual risk behavior among men participating in the enhanced intervention compared to men in a standard HIV-CT program. This work is a collaboration between the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies (University of California, San Francisco) and the California Prevention and Education Project (CAL-PEP) in Oakland, CA. The team works out of a shared understanding that service providers, researchers, and community members must collaboratively work together to create solutions that can mitigate the spread of HIV/AIDS in the African American community.