



National HIV Testing Day June 27, 2016

Research and Resources
on HIV Counseling and Testing



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

Research & Resources

This brochure lists CAPS research focusing on HIV testing and helpful resources produced by CAPS. You might use it to:

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

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

This brochure was prepared by the Technology and Information Exchange (TIE) Core: “Tying research and community together.”

Acronyms

MSM: Men who have sex with men

PI: Principal Investigator (lead researcher on the study)

VCT: Voluntary counseling and testing



Research with Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)

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.*

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 (MSM) 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, accessing hard-to-reach populations.

In addition, if a peer tests positive, the trained recruiter will assist those newly infected to access and link to care. Consequently, the peer serves as a support structure during the initial HIV testing and navigator to link to care.

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

Investigator: Greg Rebchook

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.



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.

If Bruthas is found to be effective, the intervention will reach a vulnerable population to encourage uptake of regular HIV testing and reduced sexual risk taking.

Connecting Resources for Urban Sexual Health: The CRUSH

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.

Research finding: *Since February 2014, CRUSH enrolled 262 HIV-negative participants, who were all screened and tested at baseline to receive pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). HIV tests are conducted at recurrent study visits. www.CRUSH510.org*



Youth

Technology to Connect At-Risk Youth to Testing

Investigator: Marguerita Lightfoot

Peer education and outreach strategies have been successful at reducing sexual risk behavior and increasing the use of health resources in adolescents and other at-risk groups, including adults residing in census tracts where STI rates are high. 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 proposed study makes a significant public health impact by developing and pilot testing an innovative strategy to increase the number of high-risk adolescents receiving HIV screening and by examining the effectiveness of messaging diffused through the social network of adolescents.

Transgender

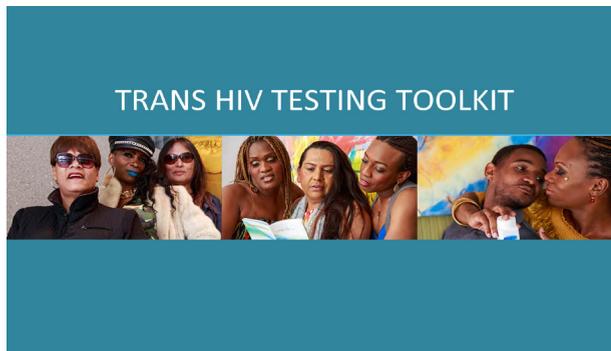
HIV Self-Testing with Trans Women

Investigators: Sheri Lippman (PI), Jae Sevelius, Susan Buchbinder (Bridge HIV)

Transgender women represent the population most impacted by HIV in the United States with infection rates approximately 40 times higher than the general population. Despite elevated risk, the rates of HIV testing within the transgender community are particularly low.

HIV self-testing kits were made available over-the-counter in late 2012 and have the enormous potential to increase testing uptake and earlier diagnosis of HIV infection, thereby leading to improved health and decreased transmission. We are exploring the feasibility, acceptability, and supportive materials needed to offer home-based self-administered HIV testing for trans women in three phases. The pilot study includes following 50 HIV-negative trans women in San Francisco in a 3-month study of home test kits.

This represents the first attempt to systematically examine acceptability, feasibility, preferences, and support for home-based rapid HIV testing in the U.S. trans female community.



The UCSF Center of Excellence for Transgender Health (CoE) has developed a Transgender HIV Testing Toolkit, consisting of five modules designed to reflect the most current HIV prevention research and best practices for serving trans and gender non-binary people. *Source:* <http://transhealth.ucsf.edu/trans?page=ev-nthtd-2016>

International Research: Africa

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.

This project offers a unique opportunity to explore self-testing among MSM within established NIH-supported cohorts where a productive research partnership is already underway.

HIV-testing Among Couples in Malawi

Investigator: Amy Conroy

Uptake of HIV testing services is less than ideal in Malawi with approximately 75% of women and 50% of men having ever tested as of 2010.

This project was a mixed methods study that explored how couple dynamics could affect decisions to test for HIV in rural Malawi.

Research finding: *Participants with higher levels of relationship unity were significantly less likely to test for HIV. This was consistent with an underlying theme in the qualitative data that an HIV test signified a breach of trust and breakdown of the relationship.*



Past Research

Characterizing the Social Environment for STI Testing and Treatment and STI Testing Preferences for Young, Minority

Investigators: Sheri Lippman (PI), Marguerita Lightfoot, Jacqueline McCright and Susan Philip (San Francisco Department of Public Health)

We characterized the sexually transmitted infections (STI) testing and treatment environment for young, African American men in San Francisco by: 1) exploring STI services use, 2) barriers to care, and 3) preferences for future diagnostic technologies and testing strategies.

Research finding: *Among the African American adolescent males recruited from a high-morbidity neighborhood, the majority of them (86.5%) preferred to seek care at traditional STD testing venues rather than non-traditional venues.*

Couples-Based VCT and HIV Prevention in South Africa

Investigator: Lynae Darbes

This project in Soweto, South Africa, an area significantly impacted by the HIV epidemic, looked at heterosexual couples' perceptions and attitudes towards couples-based VCT, as well as relationship-based predictors of HIV risk in couples (communication, intimacy, commitment, etc.).

Research finding: *For a majority of participants (both male and female), relationship factors were the primary motivation for participating in couples-based VCT with the following themes: development and deepening of relationships; couples-based VCT as a necessary precursor to getting married or having children; couples-based VCT facilitating trust in relationships.*

Evaluating the Process of Developing and Implementing an Emergency Department (ED) HIV Testing Program

Investigators: Kim Koester, Sheri Weiser, Tim Lane, Janet Myers, and Stephen Morin

We evaluated the development and implementation process of routine testing for HIV in three urban Bay Area hospital EDs serving sizable racial/ethnic minority and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations: Alameda County Medical Center-Highland Hospital, Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, and San Francisco General Hospital.

Research finding: *A common barrier was discomfort among ED providers about disclosing a positive HIV test result, but common facilitators were a commitment to underserved populations, the perception that testing was an opportunity to re-engage previously HIV-infected patients in care, and the support and resources offered by the medical setting for HIV-infected patients.*



Photo: Carlo Avila Gonzales, *The Chronicle*

CAPS/UCSF PRC Resources

CAPS HIV Counseling/Testing Research and Publications

Fact Sheets: www.caps.ucsf.edu/resources/fact-sheets

- What is the role of disclosure assistance services in HIV prevention?
www.caps.ucsf.edu/uploads/pubs/FS/pdf/revPCRSFS.pdf
- What Is the role of counseling and testing in HIV prevention?
www.caps.ucsf.edu/uploads/pubs/FS/pdf/C&TFS.pdf
- How is rapid testing used in HIV prevention?
www.caps.ucsf.edu/uploads/pubs/FS/pdf/rapidtestingFS.pdf
- What is the role of rapid testing for US-Mexico border and migrant populations?
www.caps.ucsf.edu/uploads/pubs/FS/pdf/borderrapidtestingFS.pdf

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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