



National Gay Men's HIV/AIDS Awareness Day September 27, 2017

Research and Resources
with Gay Men

UCSF Center for AIDS Prevention Studies
Prevention Research Center
Division of Prevention Science



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.

Questions? Comments? Contact Daryl Mangosing at 415 502-1000 ext. 44590 (vm only) 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)

CO-I: Co-Investigator (contributing researcher or research partner)

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), & Gloria Lockett (CAL-PEP)

This newly funded 4-year study is 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.

Research finding: *A number of Bay area houses already share HIV prevention information at house meetings, and many house parents connect members to services if necessary. Participants therefore felt that house meetings were appropriate venues for discussing the most recent prevention modalities, such as home testing and PrEP/PEP.*

Locating and Reaching HIV-Positive Black Men Who Have Sex with Men Who Have Fallen Out of HIV Care

Investigator: Wilson Vincent (PI)

If you want to help patients who have fallen out of care to re-engage in care, how do you find them? How do you reach them? These are two of the key questions this study aims to answer. This study is identifying ways of locating and recruiting HIV+ Black MSM who have fallen out of care.

We are conducting formative research in the form of semi-structured interviews with a variety of key informants, including HIV+ Black MSM themselves and their service providers. This information will be invaluable in determining the types of settings in which to develop and conduct an intervention to help HIV+ Black MSM re-engage in HIV care.

An Intervention to Increase Retention in Care among HIV-Positive Black Men

Investigator: Wilson Vincent (PI)

The National HIV/AIDS Strategy and the National Institutes of Health has emphasized achieving viral suppression among HIV+ persons in order to reduce HIV transmissibility, particularly for disproportionately affected groups such as Black men, including Black MSM, by retaining them in HIV care. However, critical psychosocial barriers to retention in care for HIV+ Black MSM, in addition to structural barriers that are typically addressed via case management or patient navigation, have not been sufficiently addressed.

Thus, this NIMH-funded study aims to develop an intervention that will (1) find HIV+ Black MSM who have left HIV care and (2) provide an individualized, combination in-person/mHealth approach that tackles psychosocial and structural barriers to care. This intervention will meet these men where they are, including clinical, community, and social settings as well as online/virtual spaces.

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

Investigators: Greg Rebchok (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)

Black men who have sex with men and women (BMSMW) 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.

Research finding: *Based on qualitative interviews, BMSMW are prioritizing their basic needs, such as food security and housing, ahead of maintaining their medical provider appointments and medications. Some participants are also stopping their HIV medical treatment medications because of side effects or interactions with other medications.*

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, and likely the first in the Middle East. The project involves formative, qualitative research with gay men; adapting the Mpowerment Project for young, gay men in; 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.



Photo: Google Maps

Increasing HIV Testing and Linkage to Care for South African MSM: Translating Research into Practice

Investigator: Susan Kegeles (PI)

In prior research (Tim Lane, PI, NIH-funded R01), we developed and tested an HIV prevention intervention for MSM in South Africa called “Boithato”, which was based on the Mpowerment Project (MP). The MP has been shown in prior research in the US to impact HIV prevention among young MSM. Boithato was found to increase HIV testing among MSM. It was decided to implement Boithato in four large districts in South Africa, funded by PEPFAR. ANOVA, an NGO in Johannesburg, has been funded to implement Boithato. Dr. Kegeles, the developer of MP and co-investigator with Dr. Lane on the NIH project, is working with ANOVA and the

communities. Boithato is a community-level HIV prevention intervention that involves mobilizing communities of MSM to support each other around HIV testing, sexual risk reduction, and link into care if found to be living with HIV.

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.*

The N’Gage Project: Creating a mHealth Tool for Enhancing HIV Care Engagement in the Dyadic Context

Investigators: Judy Tan (PI)

Black men who have sex with men (BMSM) have the poorest HIV care and treatment outcomes relative to any racial/ethnic group of MSM. The primary romantic relationship provides an important context for understanding HIV care engagement among MSM in a primary romantic relationship with another man. Relationship factors such as communication, relationship satisfaction, and social support have been shown to predict health outcomes, including those in the HIV Care Continuum.

Mobile health (mHealth) holds tremendous potential for facilitating relationship factors conducive to HIV care engagement among Black men who are in a primary romantic relationship with another man.

The goal of this project is to develop a couples-focused mHealth tool that enhances relationship factors important to HIV care engagement among HIV+ Black men who are in a primary romantic relationship with another man.

General

Project T: MSM and HIV Self-Testing

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

Project T 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 enlisted 34 members of the African American and Latino MSM and Transgender communities to act as recruiters and ask 5 MSM peers they believe to be sexually active to complete a HIV self-test. A total of 165 tests were distributed to social and sexual network members. The use of peer-driven HIV self-testing has the potential to reach young MSM who may be at high risk of infection and don't normally test.

Use of Rapid HIV Self Test by High Risk Populations

Investigators: William Brown III (Co-I) & Alex Carballo-Diéguez (PI: Columbia University and NY State Psychiatric Institute)

This study aims to determine if high-risk MSM and transgender women (TGW) who have access to a rapid HIV-self test (ST) and learn how to use it with potential sexual partners engage in less sexual risk behavior than MSM and TGW who do not use ST. HIV-uninfected participants in New York City and San Juan, Puerto Rico who have a history of unprotected anal intercourse with serodiscordant or unknown status partners are randomly assigned to either receive an intervention orienting them to effective ways of screening partners using ST kits and they will be supplied ST kits, or they will receive neither the intervention nor the supply of kits.

Research finding: *The study is ongoing. A prior study showed that participants were able to use the kits to test themselves and to test sexual partners.*

The CRUSH: Connecting Resources for Urban Sexual Health

Investigator: Janet Myers (Evaluation PI)

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.

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*



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).

Translational and implementation research

Prevention Research Center (PRC)

Investigators: Marguerita Lightfoot (PI), Greg Rebchook, Janet Myers, Susan Kegeles, Emily Arnold; George Rutherford (GHS); Rob Newells (AIDS Project of the East Bay or APEB)

This project addresses the significant HIV health disparities among African Americans by strengthening community engagement and supporting implementation of evidence-based strategies and approaches. The PRC will also translate and disseminate HIV science, train students, public health professionals and community members as well as continually evaluate its activities. The PRC is collaborating with the AIDS Project of the East Bay to adapt, implement, and evaluate an evidence-based intervention to improve engagement in healthcare among HIV-positive African American gay/bi, and other MSM, with a focus on young men.



Venues and settings

The PACE Study: Pacing Alcohol Consumption Experiment for Gay Bar Patrons in San Francisco

Investigators: Edwin Charlebois (PI), Albert Plenty, Jessica Lin, Alicia Ayala, Jennifer Hecht (San Francisco AIDS Foundation)

Research has shown that drinking alcohol is linked to unsafe sex, less safer sex negotiation, condom failure, and HIV risk. The literature suggest that gay bar patrons are an important group to reach out to for alcohol and HIV risk interventions. The PACE Study implemented and tested a multi-level structural intervention among a sample of gay bars in San Francisco consisting of: 1) increased availability of free water, 2) messaging on pacing alcohol use by drinking water, and 3) normative feedback of blood alcohol concentration (BAC%).

Research finding: *Significant differences on objective and subjective measures of alcohol use were observed. 30% of intervention bar patrons had BAC% levels over the legal driving limit, compared to 43% of control bar patrons. 78% of intervention bar patrons were above the AUDIT-C cut-off for hazardous drinking compared to 87% in control bars.*

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.*

CAPS/PRC Resources

Research and publications with gay men:

https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/?_sft_library_type=research-project&_sft_population=gay-men-and-men-who-have-sex-with-men

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

- What are men who have sex with men (MSM)'s HIV prevention needs?
<https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/gay-men-msm/>
- What are the HIV prevention needs of young men who have sex with men?
<https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/young-gay-men/>
- What are Black men's HIV prevention needs?
<https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/black-men-2017/>
- What are transgender men's HIV prevention needs?
<https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/transgender-men/>

Survey Instruments & Scales:

<https://prevention.ucsf.edu/resources/survey-instruments-and-scales/>

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

Evaluation Manuals: <https://prevention.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: <https://caps.ucsf.edu/resources/intervention-curricula/>

- Programs for HIV+ and HIV- persons.

This information was compiled for you by the CAPS **Community Engagement (CE) Core**, previously known as the *Technology and Information Exchange (TIE) Core*.

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