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Attitudes, Beliefs, and Barriers to PrEP Among Trans Men

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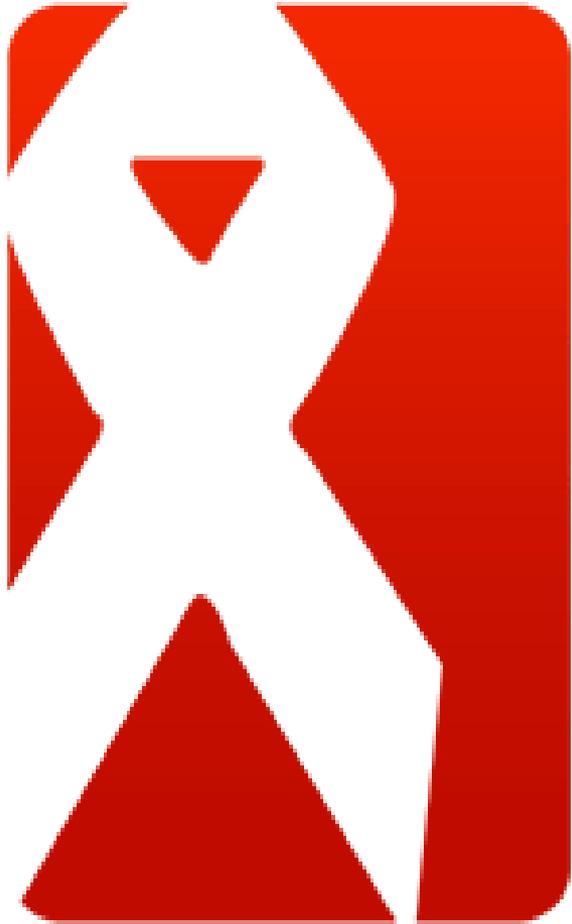
Niko Kowell

Objectives

To examine the attitudes and knowledge of transgender men (trans men) regarding pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV

To understand barriers transgender men may have to PrEP access

The authors: Stefan Rowniak RN,FNP, PhD; Chenit Ong-Flaherty RN, DNP; Nancy Selix RN, FNP, CNM, DNP; and Niko Kowell are employed by the University of San Francisco and Asian Pacific Islander Wellness Center report no conflict of interest or any sponsorship or commercial support



GETTING TO ZERO

SAN FRANCISCO

TRANS MEN WANTED

FOR FOCUS GROUPS AND INFORMATION SESSIONS
ON TRANS MEN AND PrEP



Sessions will take 1.5-2 hours of your time
Lunch or dinner provided, and \$20
as a token of appreciation for your time

Contact Niko Kowell at niko@apiwellness.org
Or call Stefan Rowniak at 415 422 4702

October 24th, Saturday 11am-1pm @API Wellness Center
November 14th, Saturday 11am-1pm @ API Wellness Center
(for trans men of color only)
3rd Focus Group Date and Location TBA



ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER
WELLNESS CENTER

Participants

Group 1 - 6 participants, White, 20s to late 60s, all taking testosterone ranging from 2 years to several decades.

Group 2 - 3 participants, mid 20s, 2 AA, 1 Latino, all taking testosterone

Group 3 - 12 participants, late teens to late 50s, 1 AA, 3 Asian American, 1 Latino, 1 Mixed Race, 6 White, all taking testosterone, several had gender confirming surgeries

Focus Group Script

PrEP knowledge

Importance of every 3 month follow up

Medical care

Side effects

Condom use

Cost

Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis

Field notes, initial write-up

Atlas.ti

Validity check

Results

6 themes identified:

The range of information about PrEP and side effects

The economic realities for trans men

Finding a trans competent provider

Trans male sexuality

The importance of contraception

Condom use

Range of information about PrEP and Side Effects

“...I've been told that it's a prevention method. And that's really about all I know about it”

“...my understanding is you don't have to take it at the same time of day in the way that you would birth control. So, is that - I'm not sure if that's right, but that's what I've heard”

“...round us up and like put us on an island or some - like put us in concentration camps”

“...like having a period without the blood”

Questioned studies due to common co-morbidities among trans men: alcohol, prescription pain killers, testosterone, IUD and other contraceptive methods, homelessness and the ability to take meds daily

The Economic Realities for Trans Men

“...if I could get it at the low...a reasonable price, then I would consider it”

“...if I only have risky behavior like a couple times a month, it's not worth like \$500”

“...having to take the pill every single day is kind of a barrier. A lot of people don't have any type of security”

Difficulty in q 3 month F/U

Finding a Trans-Competent Provider

“...it shouldn't be incumbent upon the patient to educate their doctor”

“...they'll be like, oh, maybe I had one patient and then they'll say stupid stuff”

Trans Male Sexuality

“...if I can't talk to them about my regular health needs, how am I going to talk about my sex life?”

The Importance of Contraception

“...the very first thing goes through my mind is getting pregnant - not anything about getting HIV”

Condom Use

“...it would be a very rare circumstance where I would even consider dropping the condoms”

“...in terms of anonymous, casual sex, I think I would still use a condom. I mean, so, because I have - I've been exposed to like pre-cum from men during sex, even though we use the condom”

“...if I knew that the man I was having sex with was taking PrEP, that would probably influence my decision more away from condoms”

Conclusions

Despite identified risk, many trans men still lack adequate information regarding PrEP

There exist significant barriers to PrEP access for trans men including economic hardship that is impacted by a person's transgender status and a lack of culturally competent providers for transgender people

Implications For Practice

There is a need for PrEP education and outreach to the trans male community

The education of healthcare professionals must include competency in working with transgender populations

More research is needed with regard to interactions between PrEP, testosterone, and hormonal contraception