Presenters: Daniel Davidson, Ian Jackson, Claude Louis
○ Pilot project to promote PrEP uptake among 18-34 y.o. Black and Latinx MSM in CT by having peers engage them on apps like Grindr and Jack’d
  ○ Demonstration project; not research
  ○ Theory-informed
  ○ Involved community in program development
  ○ Iterative, flexible approach
After first hearing about PrEP from a close friend, one workgroup participant said, “I ignored it. But then I was on Grindr and people had been like, oh, well, we can have sex raw because I’m on PrEP. A lot of people started saying that over the years.” Curious about “that type of sexual freedom,” he went back to his friend to learn more, who suggested he see a clinician. “The doctor informed me more, and I’ve been taking it [PrEP] ever since then.”

C4C Workgroup Participant, 2020
Background/Rationale
Connecticut Number of PrEP Users, 2012-2019

Source: AIDSvu.org 2022
WHILE 25% OF PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR PREP WERE PRESCRIBED IT IN 2020, COVERAGE IS NOT EQUAL

PREP COVERAGE IN THE U.S. BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2020

Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. 2030 Target Goal

For more information, visit cdc.gov/nchhstp/newsroom
Background/Rationale

Awareness / Willingness  Access to Healthcare  Likely to Receive Rx  Adherence / Efficacy

Adapted from Kelley, et. al. 2015
Background/Rationale

Why “apps”?

- Majority of new HIV+ in CT meeting partners online
- Majority of MSM who used Gay Social Networking (dating) apps used them daily
- Some openness to HIV prevention info on apps

Program Development: Theory

- PrEP Cascade: Awareness/Acceptability
- Motivational PrEP Continuum / Transtheoretical Model (Stages of Change)
- Social cognitive theory: observational learning, reinforcement
Starting PrEP: Stages of Change

- **PrEP Pre-contemplation**
  - "PrEP is not for me"

- **PrEP Contemplation**
  - "I’m interested but unsure"

- **PrEP Aration**
  - "I’d like to start PrEP but..."

- **PrEP Action & Initiation**
  - Has taken action to get PrEP, may have started taking it

- **PrEP Maintenance**
  - Taking PrEP and making their follow-up appointments

Adapted from Motivational PrEP Cascade Parsons, et. al. 2017
Program Development: Workgroup

- Virtual Community Engagement
Program Development: Workgroup

- Recruited 13 individuals from around Connecticut
  - 8 Black / 5 Latinx
  - Age range: 18-33
  - 2 transgender male, 1 non-binary
  - 10 gay, 1 queer, 1 bisexual, 1 multiple orient.
  - 6 on PrEP, 3 used PrEP at some point, 1 on ARV
Program Development: Workgroup

- Approaches to peer engagement
- Personal PrEP journeys
- Qualities of a PrEP Ambassador
C4C PrEP Ambassadors

- April – August 2021 implementation phase
- 9 PAs initially, 7 retained
  - 5 Black / 4 Latinx
- Recruited guys who used the apps (mainly through the apps)
- Training about PrEP and some basic motivational interviewing (MI) strategies
C4C PrEP Ambassador Training

Demographics & Lifestyle - GROUP 4, Jaoa by James and Richard

Race/ethnicity: Latinx, 21

Locations (Living situation, where they hang out):

Job/occupation: Constructor

Hobbies, how else they spend their time:

Social & Sexual Life

Who in their life do they respect or emulate?

Who influences them, especially around sexual norms?

Are they out, and to whom?

How do they typically negotiate safer sex?

What might interest them about PrEP (what specific benefits do they see in it)?

What might turn them off about PrEP?

What stage of change is this person at?
C4C PrEP Ambassador Engagement

- Be open about personal PrEP use (in profile text, in conversation)
- Look for natural opportunities to talk about PrEP
- Talk to people you think you can connect with
- Ask open-ended questions, build rapport
- Help identify/reflect back individual motivations to PrEP
- Provided HIV risk/PrEP resources
C4C PrEP Ambassadors

PREP AMBASSADOR

RESOURCE GUIDE

Chat4Change has created a resource guide for the PrEP Ambassador team and we encourage you to study them, refer to them during conversations and encourage you to send any suggestions or additional information to the academic team so can continue to build upon the resource guide.

PREP VIDEOS
Click here to access PrEP videos

PREP DECISION-MAKING RESOURCES
Click here to access information on PrEP decision-making resources

C4C PROGRAM RESOURCES
Click here to access C4C program resources

HIV PREVENTION
Click here to access HIV prevention resources
C4C PrEP Ambassadors

- Web-based portal to record significant interactions
- 113 chats logged
Chats for Change: Demographics

Race/Ethnicity n=113

- Latinx (51)
- Black (58)
- Both (4)

AGE DISTRIBUTION

- 30-34 (34% n=36)
- 18-24 (28% n=30)
- 25-29 (38% n=40)
Chats 4 Change: Platforms

Apps Used

- grindr (84)
- jack'd (17)
- instagram (4)
- other (3)
- twitter (1)
- taimi (1)
- scruff (2)
- facebook (2)
PrEP Ambassadors: Takeaways

- Naturalistic conversations with peers might reach people better than staff doing outreach
  - guys are comfortable talking about sex, condoms/PrEP, bareback sex
  - they reach out to you, rarely had to initiate

- Blurry line between social/sexual life and health promotion might not work for all participants, PAs reported “burnout”

- Could further explore use of MI strategies (e.g. open-ended Q’s)

- Keep engaging people, planting seeds, it’s a process to get people towards PrEP
Team

APNH
Chris Cole
Ian Jackson
Will Kenny
Claude Louis
Kiana McDavid
Eric Random
Kyle Rodriguez
Aaron Scott
Barry Walters

CIRA
Daniel Davidson
Jen Edelman
Derrick Gordon
Skyler Jackson
Trace Kershaw
John Pachankis
Oscar Rojas Perez
David Zelaya

Evaluator
Katie Clark

Technology
James Gowell

Interns
Conlin Bass
Emil Beckford
Kobe Pereira

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References

