



BROWN

# Using Precision Public Health to Target High-Risk Populations in Small Urban Areas through the Establishment of an HIV Implementation Science Network in New England

Jacob J. van den Berg, PhD<sup>1</sup>, Jim Pettinelli, BA<sup>2</sup>, Elaine O'Keefe, MS<sup>2</sup>, David A. Fiellin, MD<sup>2</sup>, Susan Cu-Uvin, MD<sup>1,3</sup>, Paul D. Cleary, PhD<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Brown University; <sup>2</sup>Yale University; <sup>3</sup>The Miriam Hospital



PUBLIC HEALTH

## Background

The HIV epidemic in small urban areas in New England has heightened interest in implementing more effective interventions. The Yale Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS (CIRA) and the Providence/Boston Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) collaborated in 2014 to develop a regional HIV Implementation Science Network to improve HIV prevention and treatment efforts.

## Objectives

The objectives of the New England HIV Implementation Science Network are to:

- 1) Stimulate and support research and evaluation collaborations across New England
- 2) Foster partnerships among agencies, stakeholders and researchers
- 3) Focus on implementation science in small urban areas with high prevalence of HIV



## Methods

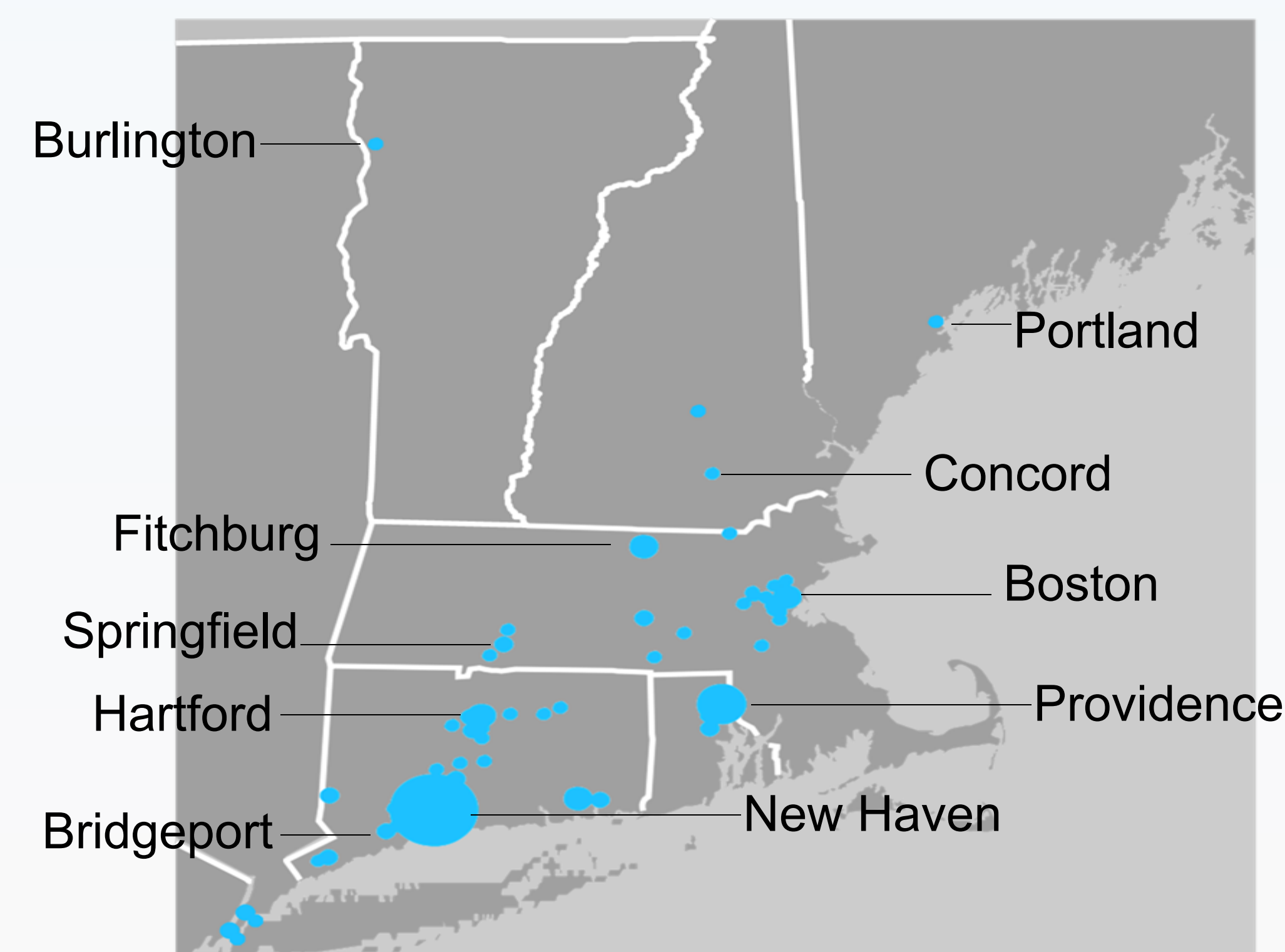
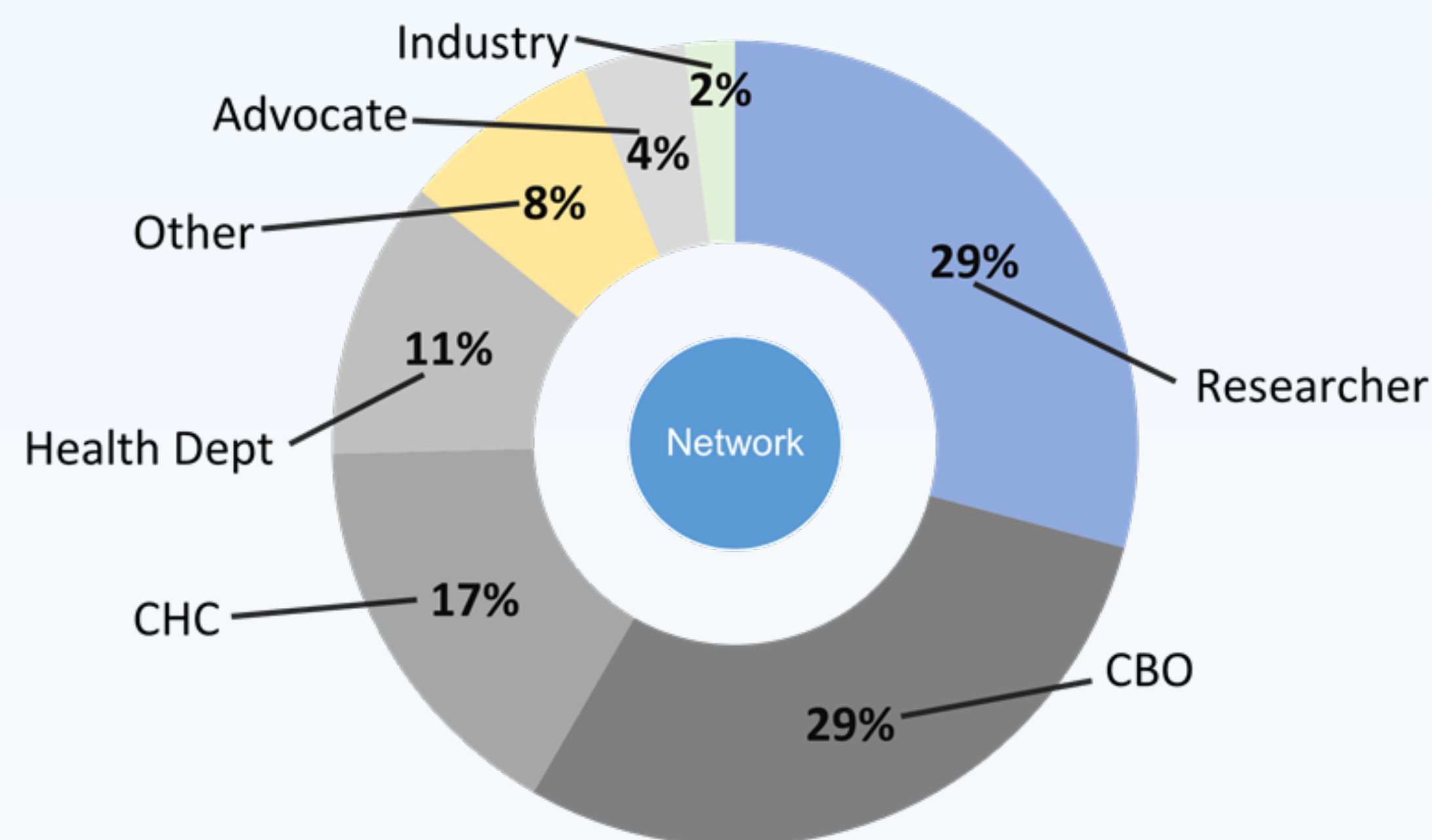
We brought together and engaged a diverse HIV workforce including researchers, advocates, health departments, service providers, consumers, and industry representatives from all six New England states to identify target populations and interventions for implementation in small urban areas that have a high prevalence of HIV. Methods used to bring members together included hosting symposia, leading work groups, offering video and teleconferences, creating a listserv for circulating funding opportunities and educational notices, and developing a Network-specific website. Successes and challenges were assessed by surveying Network members.

## Results - Successes

- Over 500 Network members, with all six New England states represented
- On average, 150 members attend Network symposia/workshops
- Approximately 10 regional projects are currently in progress
- Four Network-supported R01 applications submitted to the National Institutes of Health
- Development of guidelines for publications related to the Network
- Establishment of Network-specific website located at: <http://cira.yale.edu/network>

## Results - Successes

During our most recent symposium on June 2, 2016 in Mystic, CT, we had more than 125 members attend. The following figures show our breakout of attendees by profession and geographic spread in New England:



## Results - Challenges

- Striking an equal balance between addressing the needs of community members and researchers can be difficult.
- Varying definitions and experience with Implementation Science among Network members.
- Maintaining long-term interest in and connection to the Network by a large, diverse membership requires ongoing engagement.
- Inclusion of all New England states has been critical to the Network but involvement by all six states can be challenging.

## Implications

Building a successful regional HIV Implementation Science Network in which members are interested and engaged long-term is possible. Collaborations within the Network have led to innovative and fundable Implementation Science projects for identified target populations.

## Funding

Research supported in part by: NIMH [P30MH062294; PI: Cleary] and NIAID [P30AI042853; PI: Cu-Uvin].

