PrEP-MECK:
Increasing PrEP Uptake among Black Same-Gender Loving Men in Mecklenburg County, NC

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# Study Team and Partners

## Implementing Partners

- **Amity Medical Group**
  - Wesley Thompson (co-I)

- **RAO Community Health**
  - Bernard Davis

- **Eastowne Family Physicians**
  - Tagbo J. Ekwonu

## Academic Partners

- **Duke University Charlotte-Based Team**
  - Haley Cooper
  - Susan Reif (co-I)

- **Duke University Durham-Based Team**
  - Amy Corneli (PI)
  - Emily Hanlen-Rosado
  - Brian Perry
  - Summer Starling
  - Jamilah Taylor
## Aims

| 2019 EHE Grant | **Identify determinants of PrEP uptake and implementation strategies to address them**  
  - Initiate and engage the PrEP-MECK Coalition to inform plans  
  - Conduct formative research with BSGLM and assessments with CBOs and clinics to identify determinants  
  - Use data to identify key determinants and implementation strategies |
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| 2020 EHE Grant | **Plan implementation research**  
  - Partner with clinic representatives of the Mecklenburg County PrEP Initiative  
  - Develop implementation strategies  
  - Plan pilot |
Implementation Science Methodologies

- PRECEDE-PROCEED’s educational/ ecological assessment phase informed the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with BSGLM
- CFIR informed the assessments with clinics and CBOs
Key *Project* Outcomes

- Identified numerous determinants, mostly on client level
- Identified four implementation strategies:
  - Use financial strategies—Partner with Mecklenburg County PrEP Initiative
  - Change infrastructure—Initiate, integrate, and promote drop-in appointments at partnering clinics
  - Engage consumers—Implement a social media campaign through CBO and amplified by influencers
  - Provide interactive assistance—Initiate PrEP facilitation through a CBO-based PrEP navigator and webpage
- Working with Black-owned social media firm to finalize social media campaign based on formative research
- Published manuscript describing planning process in 2022 JAIDS IS Supplement
- Recently submitted R34 to pilot test implementation strategies

Discussion: Getting to the Next Level

Project Implementation

• #1
  • Challenge—Conducting research at start of pandemic
  • Solution—Extend recruitment/overall timeline, accept smaller sample size

• #2
  • Challenge—Learning implementation science language
  • Solution—Focus on partner strengths:
    • Community partners ensure academic partners understand community context and what’s needed
    • Academic partners focus on learning IS language, translate to community partners during project development activities—hands-on learning

EHE Initiative

Challenges

• No coordination of EHE funding across agencies—CDC, NIH, HRSA
• Sustainability of implementation strategies without EHE funding
Best Practices and Lessons Learned

• Engage community stakeholders from the start and throughout planning process
• Follow the data and establish new partnerships to address barriers identified
• Focus on building on/learning from team members’ expertise rather than ensuring all become experts in IS
Acknowledgements

• Study team and implementation partners listed earlier
• Members of the PrEP-MECK Community Coalition
• Mecklenburg County Getting to Zero Committee