

KEY DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

- It's important to address the community as a whole and not just target MSM messages, down-low messages, but male messages in general, since it is men who are driving the HIV transmission population.
- There should be some research to figure out whether there are social harms in current treatment programs for people who are HIV positive. For example, are there insurance implications? Are there policy issues? Is having one's HIV status on record, as well as the treatment piece, double confounding in terms of future employment? Is there too much trauma for the patient dealing with detox and drug rehab issues at the same time as HIV/AIDS issues?
- We need to redouble efforts in the juvenile justice system to test and treat. There is waiver authority under Medicare and Medicaid which should be used to treat the elderly and to look at adolescents that may be deemed eligible for Medicaid.
- As a research topic, we need to consider the issue of "pharming." This is what kids do when they go into somebody else's or their parents' medicine cabinet and take out whatever is there and swallow a variety of types of drugs. Does pharming lead to increased sexual activity?
- We need new models for engaging African Americans in research, particularly recruiting them into research trials. For example, in what kinds of settings are African Americans most likely to volunteer to participate? Beauty and barbershops? Schools? Churches?

- Regarding programming outreach to target populations, how do we take what we do know from past research and put that into sound bites that the target population will hear? We know they are not going to places where we go. They are not listening to what we listen to. How do we reach them where they are most likely to hear the message and act on it? The messages need to be continuous and consistent.
- Churches are doing a lot in terms of HIV outreach but they need resources to have a broader scope. There needs to be some group or mechanism to get more sub-contracts to churches who may not have the staff, the time, or the resources to compete for large-scale funding efforts. Innovative approaches to funding are needed for small, yet effect organizations.
- Issue of rapid testing and communicating the benefits of the procedure in terms of its cost effectiveness, for example.
- There is a need to look into other innovative ways of providing information to high-risk groups who will not use the traditional and conventional tools the government continues to use to disseminate information.
- It is important that the information being given is provided in a format that is real and understandable to the targeted group(s) as well as culturally relevant.
- Fund educational initiatives and rapid testing initiatives within community based organizations because the groups we are trying to target do not go to the government sources, but will utilize community based organizations.

- We need to develop a communications strategy that is consistent, continuous and that uses different mediums.
- NIDA needs to advance the research on injecting drug users and drug use in relation to behavioral changes that occur after testing.
- It is important for NIDA to look into research that examines the education of people and look at long term or life long educational needs of people in regards to HIV and AIDS.
- We need to look into the characteristics of the organizations that are implementing the CDC screening guidelines and examine how their organizational characteristics could potentially facilitate or impede prevention messages or interventions .
- We need to look into the primary care setting as a way of potentially eliminating health disparities. Primary care doctors should be trained to offer HIV testing on a routine basis.
- We cannot examine HIV without looking at health disparities and we need to look at the role of race and possibly operationalize racism as a dynamic in our field.
- In regards to working with the criminal justice system, a question was asked about other opportunities that discussants had not talked about, particularly opportunities that allow researchers to answer research questions that make sense. In response, presenters brought up the issue of conceptualizing in terms of measurement and the utility of outcomes in conducting research in the African American community;

examining issues of race in terms of intergenerational transfer of wealth;
examining how the historical burden of health disparities can be predictive
of problematic health behaviors, as well as diseases.

- Issues of prevention strategies in prison. There was a suggestion that testing should be mandatory for incarcerated populations. This has its own issues. Another prevention strategy is condom distribution, which comes with its own limitations, including the fact that sex in prisons is illegal. Therefore, distribution may constitute support of an illegal activity. Condoms can be used as weapons and contraband may be an issue. There have been two bills introduced in Congress – one is for mandatory testing in prisons and the other is for testing using a community based approach. The mandatory testing has cost implications which may make it problematic. In addition, there is a private justice system that may not be subject to federal law, and thereby not adhere to any mandatory requirements.
- Implementing harm reduction techniques to reduce the spread of HIV infection has worked in other countries
- Conducting research on the efficacy of providing funding to research centers to conduct rapid testing and counseling in treatment centers
- It is important to remember that scaling up testing and counseling may be good but resources are also required to get those who test positive into treatment.

- It is important not to get into the blame game and to ensure that we are approaching this issue on a more holistic basis.
- Advances in science and research in the HIV/AIDS field needs to be transferred to a community based organization that may not have access to the most recent research.
- NIDA could benefit greatly from collaboration with other federal agencies.
- We may need to examine what types of training should be offered to researchers in order to have them engage in participatory research and effectively engage community members and organizations in their research efforts.
- We need to look into the issue of training non-minority scientists, scholars and physicians in cross cultural sensitivity in order to teach them how to not alienate community members that come to them for services.
- The NIDA clinical trials network was established with the intent of providing an equitable infrastructure that has equal representation from researchers and practitioners – a situation where practitioners would have equal votes in everything including selecting the research concept, the design, implementation, dissemination and publication.
- Participatory research may be an important vehicle for the inclusion of African Americans in clinical trials – especially in the sense of having the community help the researcher in recruitment efforts.

- It is very important to involve the community in the research process from the beginning, even if they are not cited as authors. At a minimum, their contribution to the research needs to be acknowledged when results are published.
- Important to examine the fiscal ramifications of routine testing.
- It is important to keep the discussion regarding heterosexual transmission of HIV/AIDs going, especially when communicating any information to young African American males.
- Conduct research on effectiveness of treatment programs for people with HIV/AIDS.
- There is a need to improve our knowledge of epidemiology of non-injection drug use, including alcohol.
- We may need to look into providing training and technical assistance on how to write grants to community groups and subcontractors.
- Consolidation of ASO's and CBOs, combined with the lack of federal funding may lead to groups of people not being served.
- We need to find a way to get churches and local universities to work together, so that each entity can work with its strengths.