

TN CFAR EHE Hub

September 2024 Newsletter



Welcome back! We are excited to continue our partnership with all EHE awardees as we jump into the 2024-2025 academic year. Last year we enjoyed worked with each awardee to get their projects up and running. Sometimes this included drafting protocols, interview guides, and surveys. For others this period was focused on designing or adapting a strategy that made PrEP prescriptions more feasible to implement in their study sites. Others were focused on policy level changes that needed to be addressed to increase accessibility of PrEP. Whatever the aims of your study, we hope that you are proud of the work you have accomplished and know that you are moving the HIV prevention field forward.

This year we will continue hosting monthly mentorship meetings, providing IS methods training sessions, and work to facilitate collaboration among awardees. We will also start to think about dissemination and transition planning to ensure sustainability, as you complete your research projects. We look forward to highlighting your successes throughout the year – please let us know if you would like to present your work to an audience of EHE awardees or if you are open to writing something up for our newsletter.

Best wishes,
Carolyn Audet, Ph.D. and April Pettit, MD, MPH



Project name:

Know your status: A cluster randomized controlled trial comparing healer-initiated HIV counseling and testing to standard of care in rural South Africa

Project description:

South Africa has made progress towards their 95-95-95 goals, yet a substantial proportion of the population do not test regularly. To reach people who otherwise may avoid testing, we propose to build on our successful healer-initiated HIV counseling and testing pilot to conduct a cluster randomized controlled trial in 42 clinical catchment areas to evaluate an expanded Healer-Initiated HIV Testing and Linkage to Care intervention in rural South Africa.

Please check out our short video about the project: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crzfn44FKvk>

IS Strategy:

Task shifting of HIV counselling and testing to traditional health practitioners. All these practitioners to recruit clinics at their own homes and in their communities.

Challenges:

Currently our challenges are centered on contracts and ethics approvals; but we hope to initiate the study in October.

Solutions:

Patience... it's a virtue I do not possess in as much abundance as I should, but I am learning 😊

Successes:

We piloted this strategy via an R34 funded grant from NIMH about two years ago. Healers were enthusiastic and capable of delivering HIV counseling and testing with fidelity. Their clients were open to healer-initiated testing, despite not having sought healer services with the expectation that they would receive an HIV test.

In addition to the feasibility of this from the healer and client perspective, the Department of Health has been an amazing partner in facilitating the implementation. Their openness and excitement about new innovations is what makes something like this, an out of the box innovation, possible to implement!



Carolyn Audet, Ph.D.
Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Project Title:

The Philly Pharm-PrEP Project Implementation of Community pharmacy-based rapid HIV testing and PrEP in Philadelphia

Project Overview:

Pharmacies can fill an important gap in delivering HIV prevention care to key populations. Advantages of pharmacy-delivered care over traditional clinic-based accessibility include established community trust, increased accessibility, and experience providing primary care. We will examine key questions regarding the implementation of pharmacy-based rapid HIV testing and PrEP initiation in communities with high burden of HIV in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, an urban area prioritized by the Ending of HIV Epidemic initiative. This research will be implemented through a collaborative effort with partners from the Penn Center for AIDS Research, Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, and local community pharmacies.

IS Strategy:

We are using the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research to identify and understand the key implementation determinants and strategies to implementing HIV testing and PrEP in pharmacies.

Challenges:

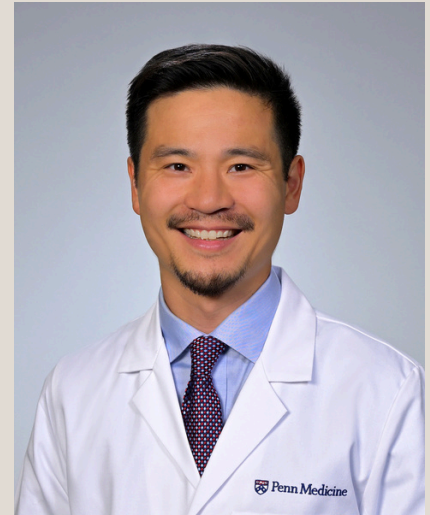
We encountered an early setback when a partner pharmacy was looted during a period of social unrest, which set back implementation of our project. In our early implementation work, we have found that pharmacists and technicians at locations that offered HIV testing were reluctant to provide them because the workflow felt too complicated, and they were not confident what to do if a test returned positive.

Solutions:

We have been fortunate to have committed pharmacy partners who are dedicated to serving their communities despite the numerous challenges they face. We are working with public health partners and pharmacy partners to identify strategies to simplify and streamline workflows and support pharmacy staff in building the skills and confidence needed to provide HIV testing and counseling services.

Successes:

We have received valuable feedback from the TN CFAR hub, particularly in using rapid qualitative analysis, which has helped expedite our research. We are excited to have completed a mixed methods study of implementation determinants, the first phase of our study, and look forward to the implementation phase!



Project PI:

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Staff Updates



Congratulations to Dr. Carolyn Audet and Dr. Amanda Mixon for becoming the new co-directors of the Center for Clinical Quality and Implementation Research (CCQIR)!

Upcoming Conferences & Workshops

- [Emory CFAR IS Hub Dissemination Workshop: Framing Communications About Science For Stakeholders](#)
September 16, 2024
- [SIRC Conference](#),
September 27-28, 2024
- [HIVR4P 2024/International AIDS Society](#)
October 6-10, 2024
- [17th Annual Conference on the Science of Dissemination and Implementation in Health](#)
December 8-11, 2024

Resources

- [HIV Implementation Science Coordination Initiative \(NorthWestern\)](#)
- [National Ending the HIV Epidemic Partnerships for Research Meeting resources](#)

Opportunities

- [Inaugural Annual Dissemination and Implementation Science Institute](#)

- Notice of Intent to Publish Announcement for the Confluence of Cancer Stigma and HIV Stigma in HIV-positive Individuals Diagnosed with Cancer (R01 Clinical Trial Option).
- Notice of Intent to Publish Announcement for the Confluence of Cancer Stigma and HIV Stigma in HIV-positive Individuals Diagnosed with Cancer (R21 Clinical Trial Option).
- Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE).
- The Confluence of Cancer Stigma and HIV Stigma in HIV-Positive Individuals Diagnosed with Cancer (R01 Clinical Trial Option).
- The Confluence of Cancer Stigma and HIV Stigma in HIV-Positive Individuals Diagnosed with Cancer (R21 Clinical Trial Option).
- Single Cell Opioid Responses in the Context of HIV (SCORCH) Program: Data Mining and Functional Validation (R01 Clinical Trial Not Allowed).
- Single Cell Opioid Responses in the Context of HIV (SCORCH) Program: Data Mining and Functional Validation (R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed).
- Advancing Research On Molecular Targets and Mechanisms that Influence the Interplay Between Sex Hormones, HIV, and Addictive Substances (R01 Clinical Trials Not Allowed).
- Advancing Research on Molecular Targets and Mechanisms that Influence the Interplay Between Sex Hormones, HIV, and Addictive Substances (R21 Clinical Trials Not Allowed).

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