Optimizing Health Outcomes for People with Criminal Justice Involvement

Presented by Nina T. Harawa, PhD, MPH
Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology

Who Am I?
Scholar, Educator, Epidemiologist, Mother, Patient
Black woman, both an immigrant and citizen by birth.
Director, Policy Core, UCLA Center for HIV Identification, Prevention, and Treatment Services (CHIPTS)

@Harawa_PhD
Carceral populations

Mass incarceration: 200,000 to 2.2 million

People Serving Life Exceeds Entire Prison Population of 1970

FEBRUARY 20, 2020
In this report, we present a closer look at the rise in life sentences amidst the overall expansion.

Women’s state prison populations have grown faster than men’s over the past 30 years. Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics.
The UCLA Department of Medicine currently spearheads two research studies to test the effectiveness of community-based interventions in improving health outcomes among populations at-risk or currently living with HIV. A third observational study called BARS, involves one-time qualitative interviews.

This consortium of studies includes:

- LINK2
- MEPS
- BARS

Both LINK2 and MEPS studies include navigation principles and cash incentives to facilitate access to services upon release from jail or prison in order to support, linkage, retention, stability, and harm reduction. LINK2 also works with people who have other risk factors for poor engagement in care.

The findings from these studies seek to build on current best practices using a collaborative approach between the study team and direct service providers.
GOALS:

• To adapt the LINK LA peer navigation intervention for adults to create a Youth Service Navigation (YSN) intervention to guide youth to needed services along the continuum of HIV care. This intervention combines medical, substance use and mental health care with comprehensive reentry support.

• To test the effectiveness of the new YSN intervention compared to standard of care services.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (Community Recruits):

• Diagnosed HIV+
• Ages 16-25
• Not assigned female at birth
• English language fluency
• Has experienced any of the following:
  • criminal-justice involvement in prior 12 months,
  • parents ever incarcerated,
  • involvement in child protective services ever,
  • current housing instability,
  • current food insecurity, OR
  • recent use of illegal substances.
• Resident of Southern California or State of Illinois

Enrollment goal: 142
Length of follow-up: 12 months
Compensation: Up to $260

Contact: dahernandez@mednet.ucla.edu; 213-587-1525
WHY DOES THIS STUDY MATTER?

• HIV prevalence among incarcerated youth living with HIV (YLWH) is three times that of the general population.

• Less than half of YWH achieve HIV viral load suppression due to poor retention and adherence to anti-retroviral therapy (ART).

• Existing linkage and retention services are insufficient to meet the needs of criminal justice-involved (CJI) YLWH and those with other risk factors that may increase their risk of poor engagement in care.

GOALS: To test the effectiveness of the Mobile Enhanced Prevention Support (MEPS) intervention:
1. To improve engagement in PrEP
2. To encourage regular screening for HIV, STIs, and hepatitis C
3. To encourage linkage to and retention in treatment for substance use disorders
4. To reduce recidivism
MEPS

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- HIV negative/unknown status
- 18-49 of age
- Transgender woman or cis-gender man
- Has sex with men
- Housed in LA County MCJ K6G unit OR living in the community less than 12 months post-release from incarceration
- Has sought help for substance use disorder
- Resident of LA County

Enrollment goal: 300
Length of follow-up: 9 months
Compensation: $260 and up

Contact: GVictorianne@mednet.ucla.edu; 424-501-4829

MEPS

WHY DOES THIS STUDY MATTER?

- Many people are contracting HIV even though we have the tools to prevent it.
- Minoritized populations (race, sexuality, gender), people with substance use disorders, and people who have been incarcerated are at greater risk for HIV and other STIs.
- Reentry is a particularly risky time for substance use-related harms.
- Prevention case management and patient navigation are often not available for people at risk for HIV.
The BARS Study: Building Agent Based Models of Racialized Justice System Study in Black MSM

BARS Study (NIDA funded)

- **Focus:** Opioid use amongst recently incarcerated Black MSM

- The primary goal of this qualitative interview protocol is to examine institutional and social network contributors to opioid use (including prescription opioids, heroin, and synthetic opioids such as fentanyl), opioid use disorder, and opioid-related harms among younger Black men who have sex with men (YBMSM) who have been involved with the criminal justice/corrections system.

- Our approach is informed by the risk environment framework and a life course perspective. The risk environment framework recommends targeting an environment which creates risk for drug misuse and abuse, and then working with a community as a whole rather than with individuals.
**Project Initiatives**

- Book drive for Men’s Central Jail
- Health talks at residential recovery facilities, led by UCLA MD/PhD student
- Activism – L.A. Regional Reentry Program
- Development of community staff members
From Our Team to Yours:

THANK YOU!