How to Reach the Hidden: Strategies for Recruiting HIV-Positive Transgender Women

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Acknowledgements

• Research Mentors & Co-Investigators
  – Dr. Barbara Habermann  
    Indiana University School of Nursing-Indianapolis
  – Dr. Eric Wright  
    Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health-IUPUI

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Objectives

• Study overview
• Discuss recruitment strategies
• Describe recruitment challenges
• Outline lessons learned
• Propose new strategies for recruitment
Transgender Research

Has been limited included in the broader scope of LGB studies.

Policy makers have called for greater emphasis on transgender health.
Using a grounded theory approach and qualitative interviews, this study will explore:

- Social network influences on healthcare utilization
- Patterns of healthcare use
- Quality of healthcare encounters

Research Priorities:
- Social and structural influences on healthcare
- Inequities in healthcare access
- Transgender specific health needs
Transgender Women

- Transgender women (TGW)
  - Biological men who live their lives as women.
  - Most marginalized of all gender and sexual minorities
  - Increased risk for violence and discrimination.
Transgender Women and HIV

- High rates of HIV prevalence
- High rates of morbidity and mortality
- Least likely to establish and remain engaged in HIV care
HIV-Related Stigma

- HIV remains one of the most stigmatizing illnesses
- HIV positive TGW especially face social marginalization and stigma related to their gender identity and HIV status
Pilot Study Aims

- Test recruitment strategies and appropriateness of interview guide
- Recruit 5 HIV-positive TGW using purposive and snowball sampling
## Pre-recruitment phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recruitment/Collaborating Sites</th>
<th>Number of HIV+ TGW (served in previous 12 months)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH)</td>
<td>34*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marion County Public Health Department (MCPHD)</td>
<td>32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wishard Infectious Disease Clinic</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IU Health Life Care Infectious Disease Clinic</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Infectious Disease of Indiana</td>
<td>~5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Damien Center (AIDS service organization( ASO)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brothers United of Indianapolis (ASO)</td>
<td>68**</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Represents unique and non-overlapping TGW
**Includes both HIV+-/- TGW

Data as of 1/2012
Recruitment

• Phase I
  – Introductory letters and study flyers were mailed to HIV + TGW
  – Flyers posted at collaborating clinics and ASO.

• Phase II
  – Held information meetings with staff at collaborating agencies
  – Posted recruitment flyers in areas designated by staff
Other Recruitment Strategies

Indy Gay PRIDE

Talbott Street Night Club

Indiana AIDS Walk

Black PRIDE Festival
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number of recruitment flyers distributed</th>
<th>No. letters returned</th>
<th>Number of successful interviews scheduled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/11/12</td>
<td>Attended Indy Black PRIDE</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/5/12</td>
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<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

N=3
Recruitment Flyer

Are you a transgender woman who is:
Living with HIV/AIDS and at least 18 years or older?

If you answered yes to the questions above you may be able to take part in a study about the experiences of seeking, entering, and staying in HIV care. Information from this study will increase knowledge and awareness of transgender women’s HIV health needs and improve the HIV healthcare experiences of transgender women.

Call Dana H. RN, MSN
Indiana University School of Nursing
at (317) 759-3885 for more information

Please note that all eligible participants will be asked to take part in a one-on-one 60-90 minute interview. Interviews will be held in private location. Your name and personal information are not required to participate. A gift card will be given to all women who complete the interviews.
Lessons Learned

• Opt-in recruitment
• Recruitment through the state health department
• Community events
• Community gate-keeper (transgender peer)
• Phone calls versus letters
Lessons Learned

• Face-to-face interviews preferred
• “I am a woman, just like you”
• Include incentives on recruitment flyer
• Employ less restrictive inclusion criteria
• Include question about other strategies for recruitment
Next Steps/New Directions

- Form a transgender advisory board
- Respondent driven sampling
- Increase recruitment incentive from $25 to $50
- Include incentive on recruitment flyers
- Include question about best strategies for recruitment in interview
## Research Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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