

## **Abstract**

### ***Background:***

Even though there are already evidence-based practices guided by the CDC 2017 PrEP guidelines to prevent new HIV infections, inadequate knowledge and the inconsistent use of this current protocol aimed at promoting screening and counseling in a sex positive and culturally sensitive way have been found to be barriers to PrEP rollout, linkage, adherence, retention, and engagement among at-risk African American MSM population. This project aimed at educating the healthcare providers and the PrEP navigators to increase the use of screening tools, increase counseling provided to patients, ensure that patients who are prescribed PrEP are filling/refilling their prescriptions and maintaining their routine follow ups (retention).

### ***Methods:***

Using a quasi-experimental design, this project implemented an evidence-based *PrEP* awareness campaign to improve the knowledge of the healthcare providers and the PrEP navigators on the use of existing screening tools and, improve counseling and retention of patients on PrEP.

### ***Results:***

To assess for Knowledge of PrEP, a total of 88 participants were enrolled in the intervention, 32 and 16 of them completed the pre and post intervention phase respectively. Findings showed significant improvement in knowledge in EMR PrEP documentation and slight to no statistical differences in overall PrEP knowledge. There was no statistical difference in counseling pre and post (n= 166, pretest = 87.7%, posttest = 88.2%, p= 0.254). However, statistical significance was demonstrated in PrEP prescription and retention (n=26, pretest = 34.6%, posttest = 65.4%)

### ***Conclusion:***

The improvement in knowledge of EMR PrEP documentation and, the improvement in prescription and retention after a PrEP awareness campaign fully supports the evidence that knowledge reinforcement among health care providers and patient navigators increases the overall screening, counseling, access and utilization of PrEP.

### ***Keywords:***

HIV, African American MSM, Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), barriers, intervention.