



National HIV Prevention Conference

Atlanta, Georgia - Jun 12-15, 2005

[TITLE:] ADVANCING HIV PREVENTION IN RURAL ARKANSAS

Natl HIV Prev Conf. 2005 Jun 12-15 (abstract no. M1-C1802)

Smith, AJ; Gaynor, H

Jefferson Comprehensive Care System, Inc., Pine Bluff, AR

ISSUE: Individuals considered at high risk for HIV infection are people who have had unprotected sex or have shared injecting equipment in a high prevalence setting with a person who is living with HIV, and individuals that demonstrate substance and drug abuse behaviors. Many HIV positive individuals have engaged in at least one of these behavior factors prior to their HIV diagnosis.

SETTING: Jefferson Comprehensive Care System, Inc. (JCCSI) is a non-profit Community Based Organization located in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. JCCSI provides Early Intervention Services (EIS) to a ten county service area: Arkansas, Ashley, Chicot, Desha, Drew, Lincoln, Lonoke, Jefferson, Prairie, and Pulaski county. Six of the ten counties contain no urban centers and are located in the impoverished Mississippi River Delta area.

PROJECT: Using the Healthy Relationship Intervention (HRI), developed by Dr. Seth Kalichman of the University of Connecticut (formerly of the Medical College of Wisconsin), Healthy Relationships is one of the first behavioral interventions for HIV-positive individuals of both genders to demonstrate effective HIV-transmission risk reduction. The HRI is grounded in the idea that new behaviors are learned either through direct experience or by modeling the behavior of others (Source: University of Texas at Southwestern).

RESULTS: From August 2004 through January 2005, 27 HIV positive individuals were enrolled in the Healthy Relationship Program. Participants included 11 (40%) males and 16 (60%) females. African-Americans comprised 85% (23) and Caucasians 15% (4). 19 (70%) participants were heterosexual and 8 (30%) participants were men who had sex with men (MSM). Of the 27 participants four were between the ages of 20-29, eight were 30-39, eight were 40-49, and 6 were 50+. Of the 27 clients participating, 24 clients (89%) completed the program. Participants have demonstrated positive behavioral changes to

reduce stress factors and increase positive outcomes. Past participants have expressed behavioral modification regarding unprotected sex, disclosure to family, friends, and partners, and the enhancement of positive values to make life changing decisions.

LESSONS LEARNED: 1) Along with the existing partnership of JCCSI satellite clinics, new partnerships are vital to effectively impact high risk and very high risk targeted populations. Collaboration efforts have proven effective to reaching high and very high risk individuals. Newly developed partnerships include the Arkansas Department of Corrections (ADC), Jefferson County Health Department, and Addiction Treatment and Recovery Centers located within the state of Arkansas. Each agency have expressed great concern and need for the implementation of a behavior modification program to reduce the transmission rate of HIV/AIDS. 2) JCCSI has found the most important factor to reaching the HIV population is through consumers. Consumers within JCCSI staff and past participants of the Healthy Relationship program have been an effective tool to reaching other HIV positive and non-positive individuals. Consumers buying-in to the program mission and goal has created opportunities for the program to gain support, participation of consumers on several boards within the agency, and enhanced a level of confidence about the organization to the consumers and the community. Therefore, clients need to buy-in on programs offered.



[Download PDF of this abstract.](#)

050612
M1-C1802

Copyright notice: The National HIV Prevention Conference is collaborative effort by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a U.S. Government agency, and other governmental and non-government organizations. All abstracts published by the conference organizers are in the public domain and can be used without permission. Proper citation, however, is required.