

Project Title: Feasibility of PrEP for Persons Who Inject Amphetamines in New York City and Rural Illinois

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Abstract

People who inject drugs (PWID) are at risk for HIV and there are indications that we may see increases in HIV transmission rates in the near future. PWID who inject amphetamines may be at even greater risk for HIV, compared to PWID who inject other substances, due to increased injection and sexual behaviors associated with amphetamine use. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is an effective Evidence-based intervention (EBI) to prevent HIV infections among PWID. Most PWID are eligible for PrEP, but utilization of PrEP is low among PWID. There have been no studies focusing on rural and urban differences among amphetamine injecting PWID and PrEP, even though differences in risk environment by rural and urban setting probably affect PrEP interventions. Nor have barriers to, and facilitators of, PrEP use among amphetamine injecting PWID been adequately studied. Syringe exchange programs (SEPs) successfully reduce HIV incidence and may be well positioned to implement PrEP for amphetamine injecting PWID, but state differences and policies could impact SEPs PrEP implementation readiness, as well as create state-specific barriers and facilitators to PrEP for amphetamine injecting PWID. This study uses ethnographic methods guided by the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR) to assess PrEP implementation readiness and identify barriers to, and facilitators of, PrEP implementation for amphetamine injecting PWID in rural Illinois and New York City (NYC). First, we assess PrEP implementation readiness at SEP programs and other organizations serving rural and urban amphetamine injecting PWID (e.g., health departments, HIV/AIDS service organizations, substance use treatment facilities, and other organizations that are revealed during ethnographic fieldwork) by focusing on the feasibility and capacity for a PrEP implementation. Second, we identify barriers to, and facilitators of PrEP readiness among amphetamine injecting PWID residing in rural and urban settings, and among other organizations serving rural and urban amphetamine injecting PWID. Barriers and facilitators are explored at the individual level, as well as the organizational level by exploring amphetamine injecting PWID perceptions and experiences with local programs and at the institutional level by exploring amphetamine injecting PWIDs experiences with local programs and their policies. This project will be the first to explore rural and urban differences (and similarities) among amphetamine injecting PWID in relation to PrEP readiness.