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| Name of Intervention | Popular Opinion Leader |
| Based on Behavioral and Social Science Theory(ies) | Diffusion of Innovation Theory Social Network Theory Social Learning Theory |
| Summary of Intervention | Popular Opinion Leader (POL) consists of a cadre of trusted, well-liked men who frequent gay bars who are trained to endorse safer sexual behaviors in casual, one-on-one conversations with peers at the bars and other settings. During these conversations, the popular opinion leader corrects misperceptions, discusses the importance of HIV prevention, describes strategies he uses to reduce his own risk (e.g., keeping condoms nearby, avoiding sex when intoxicated, resisting coercion for unsafe sex), and recommends that the peer adopt safer sex behaviors. Popular opinion leaders wear buttons displaying the project logo, which also is on posters around the bars, as a conversation-starting technique. Each leader agrees to have at least 14 conversations and to recruit another popular opinion leader. |
| Clearly Defined Audience | Men who have sex with men, and also men who frequent gay bars and male sex workers |
| Goals and Objectives of the Intervention | To reduce high risk sexual behaviors for HIV infection by intervening on the community level to influence the adoption of behavior change by changing peer norms |
| Risk Behaviors the Intervention Focuses on | Unprotected anal sex with multiple sex partners |
| Factors Influencing Behaviors (FIBs)/ Behavioral Determinants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge (lack) • Perceived risk (low) • Outcome expectancy • Self-efficacy (low) • Group/peer norms (including social support) |
| Core Elements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention is directed to an identifiable target population in well-defined community venues and where the population's size can be estimated • Ethnographic techniques are systematically used to identify segments for the target population and to identify those persons who are most popular, well-liked, and trusted by others in each population segment |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the life of the program, 15% of the target population size found in intervention venues is trained as POLs • The program teaches POLs skills for initiating HIV risk reduction messages to friends and acquaintances during everyday conversations • The training program teaches POLs characteristics of effective behavior change communication messages targeting risk reduction attitudes, norms, intentions and self-efficacy. In conversations, POLs personally endorse the benefits of safer behavior and recommend practical steps needed to implement change • Groups of POLs meeting together weekly in sessions that use instruction, facilitator modeling, and extensive role play exercises to help POLs refine their skills and gain confidence in delivering effective HIV prevention messages to others. Groups are small enough to provide extensive practice opportunities for all POLs to shape their communication skills and create comfort in delivering conversational messages • POLs set goal to engage in risk reduction conversations with friends and acquaintances in the targeted population between weekly sessions • POLs' conversational outcomes are reviewed, discussed, and reinforced at subsequent training sessions • Logos, symbols, or other devices are used as "conversation starters" between the POLs and others |
| Setting | Gay bars or venues which gay men frequent |
| Duration | Repeated contacts; Peer opinion leaders training includes four 90-minute sessions; Peer opinion leaders then make at least 14 contacts with friends and acquaintances |
| Provides Opportunities to | Training allow for opinion leaders to role-play and |

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| Practice Relevant Skills | receive feedback on HIV risk reduction messages in spontaneously initiated conversations |
| Outcomes | The POL intervention decreased unprotected anal intercourse from between 15 to 29 percent; increased condom use by 50%; and the number to sex partners decreased. |
| Type of Intervention | CLI |

Journal Citation(s):

Kelly, J.A., St. Lawrence, J.S., Diaz, Y.E. Stevenson, L.Y., Et al. (1991). HIV Risk Behavior Reduction Following Intervention with Key Opinion Leaders of Population: An Experimental Analysis, American Journal of Public Health, 81 (2), 168 - 171

Contact:

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