Multi-agency partnerships to improve HIV care among the homeless in Los Angeles: An innovative federal, county and city collaboration

Henry D. Anaya, PhD

United States Department of Veterans Affairs

UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine
Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI)

Mission: To enhance quality and outcomes of VA healthcare by implementing clinical research findings into routine practice

- Integrate research, clinical, operational, policy expertise to improve healthcare policy
- Target high priority disease /health delivery issues
- Evaluate interventions to encourage best practices
- Identify knowledge gaps/create new data to inform policy
Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI)

- Seattle, WA
  - Ischemic Heart Disease
  - Spinal Cord Injury

- Palo Alto, CA
  - Chronic Heart Failure
  - HIV/Hepatitis
  - Substance Use Disorder

- Los Angeles, CA
  - CIPRS
  - HIV/Hepatitis

- Minneapolis, MN
  - Polytrauma & Blast-related Injuries

- Ann Arbor, MI
  - Diabetes

- Hines, IL
  - Spinal Cord Injury

- Indianapolis, IN
  - Stroke

- Iowa City, IA
  - eHealth

- Little Rock, AR
  - Mental Health

- Bedford, MA
  - eHealth
  - HIV/Hepatitis
QUERI HIV-Hepatitis mission:

To improve the identification and patient care of Veterans infected with the Human Immunodeficiency (HIV) and Hepatitis C (HCV) viruses through implementation of evidence-based findings

Three main research areas:

• Better Disease Identification
• Improving Linkage, Retention, and Adherence to Care
• Reorganizing Care for Improved Coordination and Value
Why Screen and Test for HIV?

• CDC Underestimation of HIV infection data (40% underreport/yr)
• 50,000+ new cases annually in US
• 60% of Americans never tested for HIV
• Treatable, if detected
• Late treatment/diagnosis = ↑ HIV mortality
Goals for the National HIV/AIDS Strategy

Reduce new HIV infections
- Lower the annual number of new infections by 25%
- Reduce HIV transmission by 30%
- Increase % of people with HIV who know their serostatus

Increase access to care and improve outcomes for HIV+
- Increase % of newly diagnosed patients linked to care

Reduce HIV-related health disparities
- Improve access to prevention and care services for all Americans
HIV in the VA

- Largest provider of HIV care in the world
- Cares for 20,000+ HIV-positive patients annually
- VA patients ↑ risk of HIV, low testing numbers
  - (8 out of 10 never tested for HIV)
Recent Statistics on Homelessness

- 3.5 million homeless nationwide
- LA County homeless estimates: 80,000 at any given time
- 38-40% (≈30,000) are veterans
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City/ Population</th>
<th>Seroprevalence %</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego, CA</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco, CA</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why do homeless have low rates of HIV testing?

**Barriers**

- Conventional HIV C&T requires 2 appointments
- Patients/providers do not prioritize prevention
- Transportation issues
- Competing priorities (food, safety, and shelter)
Routine HIV Testing

Recent HIV testing recommendation (CDC/VA):
Routine HIV testing, 13-64 yrs., once/lifetime

- Cost-effective even at levels of low prevalence (<=.01%)

- Novel approaches (e.g., rapid testing) should be considered
Advantages over current testing methods:

- non-invasive (oral swab)
- Equivalent to blood-based test
- Results in 20 minutes
Project #1

HIV testing initiative for Homeless Veterans in Los Angeles County

Project # RRP 06-129 - $75,000

• Collaboration with LA County Dept. of Health
• Accessed 9 shelters in LA County
• 2664 approached; 136 (5.1%) were eligible
• 97 (71% of those eligible) accepted
Homeless Pilot Findings

- Rate of new incidence = 1.6%
- High acceptance of RT
- 78% reported “chances of getting infected with HIV” as either “none” or “low”
Implications:

On site HIV testing in homeless shelters

- RT feasible/acceptable at shelters
- Collaboration with non-federal agencies practical
- Policymakers should consider RT when implementing routine HIV testing in shelter settings
One problem though...

Because our pilot was VA-funded, we could only outreach and link Veterans to care

Solution:
apply for external (non-VA funding)

(thanks, Gilead Sciences!)
Project #2
Implementing HIV Testing in Los Angeles-Area Homeless Shelters: A Collaborative Effort between Federal, County, and City Government

External grant—UCLA/Gilead Sciences

Dual award: 150,000k initial award;
66K supplemental award

Participating agencies:
- US Department of Veterans Affairs
- Los Angeles Homeless Services Agency (LAHSA)
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
- Los Angeles City AIDS Coordinator’s Office
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)

LAHSA

- Independent unit of county government
- Addresses homelessness on a regional basis
- Funds most homeless services in LA County

Gained access to homeless shelters through series of meetings with LAHSA leadership
Results*

- >800 tested, 7 HIV-positives
- 6/7 linked to long-term care
- New standard of care for Los Angeles County

*Anaya HD, Butler J, Knapp H, Conners E, Chan K, Rumanes S. *Implementing an HIV Rapid Testing/Linkage to Care Project among Homeless Individuals in Los Angeles County: A Collaborative Effort between Federal, County, and City Government.* Submitted to Chronic Care, April, 2014.
Future Efforts...
Implementing HIV Testing for Homeless Shelter Residents within Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties (Bay Area, CA)

- Expansion of recent Los Angeles-based efforts
- Broaden scope to include bay area municipalities
- Collaboration with VA/Stanford University,
- MOUs w/ San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz Counties
- Externally funded-Gilead Sciences or PCORI
Recent studies

TIME magazine (4/26/14):
45% homeless men previous TBI

- Topolovec-Vranic et al.
  - ≈50% of homeless had previous TBI
  - 87% injured before becoming homeless

- Hwang, et al.
  - 61% homeless had previous TBI (7x higher than gen. pop.)
Homeless Outreach/Linkage to Care-Mississippi

- Expansion of recent Los Angeles-based efforts
- Collaboration with Jackson, MS VAMC
- Start date: Feb., 2014
Thank you

Henry D. Anaya, PhD

VA Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) HIV-Hepatitis, Los Angeles, CA

Center of Innovation for Complex Chronic Healthcare, Chicago, Il

UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine

henry.anaya@va.gov
hanaya@ucla.edu