



# Increasing PrEP Use In Cisgender Women Through Contextualization Within Sexual Wellness Services: A QI Intervention Pilot



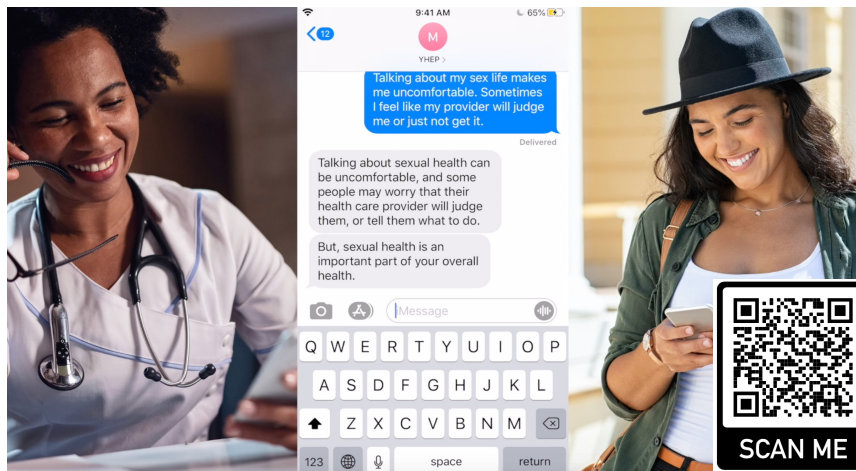
Alexander Auchus<sup>1</sup>, Linden Lalley-Chareczko, MA<sup>2</sup>, Helen C. Koenig, MD, MPH<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Pennsylvania, <sup>2</sup>Philadelphia FIGHT Community Health Centers

## Background

- Antiretroviral preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) with daily oral tenofovir/emtricitabine is 99% effective in preventing HIV transmission via sex (“PrEP,” 2019)
- PrEP uptake among eligible ciswomen is particularly low across the U.S. (Bush et al., 2016)
- Societal stigma associated with PrEP has been identified as one of the most significant barriers to PrEP use among ciswomen (Goparaju et al., 2017)
- Social networks and normative contexts impact the likelihood of PrEP uptake among cisgender women (Johnson et al., 2020)

## Methods



- Developed 18 minute video intervention to contextualize PrEP among other sexual health tools such as contraceptives, condoms, and STI testing
- Aimed to address social stigma associated with taking PrEP
- Visualized text-message conversation between a feminine/female patient and a feminine/female provider
- Provider explains that sexual history discussions are judgment-free
- Provider presents PrEP alongside familiar sexual health tools



- Video clips describing PrEP and other aspects of sexual health such as STI testing and condoms are interspersed

**“We are never going to tell you what to do, its all about giving you the right options for your health.”**



- Conversation followed by 14 minute slideshow describing sexual health tools such as STI testing, birth control, and PrEP
- Assessed feasibility of displaying video in an urban, primary care waiting room

**“There are lots of tools to stay healthy. Like STI testing, emergency birth control, and PrEP.”**

## Results

- 79 patients viewed video, 51 of which were assigned female sex at birth (mean age =21.6; SD=2.5)
- Three cisgender female patients (Patients 1, 2 & 3) completed PEP during the video exposure period
- Only Patient 1 (age 20, Black and pansexual) who is in a polyamorous relationship with a cisgender female partner, a male partner, and a transgender female partner began PrEP use after PEP use
- Patients 2 and 3 (ages 19 & 20, Black and heterosexual) did not start PrEP after PEP
- No other ciswomen began PrEP use during the exposure period

## Conclusions

- An 18 minute video contextualizing PrEP among other sexual wellness tools was viewed by 51 female patients over a 17 day period
- Only 1 of 3 ciswomen prescribed post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) during the intervention exposure period elected to start PrEP after PEP
- Patient characteristics suggest acceptability of PrEP may be higher for cisgender females whose social circles are common PrEP research and advocacy targets
- Findings emphasize the importance of normalizing PrEP as a sexual wellness tool that can be used by anyone
- As only one ciswoman who viewed the video initiated PrEP use during the exposure period, more research is needed to see if similar video interventions can impact long-term decisions to start PrEP in this population

**Thank you to everyone at Philadelphia FIGHT!**