

**Voices From the Frontlines:
Outreach Worker Experiences In
Engaging Young HIV+ MSM of Color
in Services and Care**

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**Expectations of an
Outreach Worker**

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What Was the Purpose of the Session?

As per the previous OWMs, it has been identified that staff turnover as related to the outreach workers for this initiative has been high and often influenced by:

- inconsistencies between organizational expectations and outreach workers' performance, and
- burnout expressed by outreach workers as impacted by organizational and client expectations

In order to learn more about the factors influencing performance, burnout, and effectiveness an exercise was implemented with outreach workers to identify and discuss their perceptions of what

What Did We Hope to Get out of the Session?

- This discussion was intended to assist the participants in identifying challenges and barriers to effective outreach performance and to also assist them in identifying possible strategies to increase their effectiveness.
- Also, the session would serve as an opportunity for the collective group to identify similar challenges that may be cross-site and provide potential resolutions or strategies that had been implemented to address those barriers/challenges.
- While implementing the activity in smaller groups it became apparent that many of the outreach workers had not previously attempted to identify these key factors or expectations and it was a challenging exercise for many participants to

What Was Shared? (1)

In small groups the following items were identified:

Expectations of an Outreach Worker		
Organizational Expectations	Client Expectations	Self-Expectations
"You do what I say" mentality Appropriate resources, both internally and externally Don't usurp your role Meet deliverables Find positives/high risks Job is your priority Implement the "how's" strategy Go to dangerous/risky venues Overwork and underpaid Increasing numbers without proper resources Changing job descriptions Forget about your personal life	Confidentiality Expect immediate results/resources Always right Always available Entitlements Advocate for the client Listen Protect privacy Have an answer Be their therapist Incentives Be their priority	Client centered Open minded Raise based on performance Growth within organization Praise from management Give 110% Retain follow-up

However, it was still necessary to have additional discussion to determine how these items impacted performance...

What Was Shared? (2)

This discussion was followed by another activity in which the larger group listed the realistic expectations and the unrealistic expectations of being an outreach worker.

Realistic vs. Unrealistic Expectations of an Outreach Worker & Potential Strategies to Cope with these Expectations	
Reminders •No phone calls after hours unless life death •Empower clients to be more independent •Write down the realistic expectations •Communicate effectively with your clients •Expect a fair power balance •Learn to say NO, and explain why you are saying NO	•No sleep •No private life •Lack of study time •Doing everything for clients •Increasing numbers without proper resources •No dating •Overwork myself •Sacrifice personal life •Giving out personal cell phones •"Outing" your friends •Outreach workers should NOT be expected to be psychotherapists

What Questions Remain?

- What avenues exist for Outreach Workers to express concerns about unrealistic expectations?
- When would additional conversation take place to determine how to address unrealistic expectations?
- What strategies can Outreach Workers implement with supervisors' assistance to prevent burnout?
- How can Outreach Workers serve as resources for one another to develop effective solutions to



HIV+ YMCSM Recruitment Strategies

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What Was the Purpose of the Session?

- To understand what recruitment strategies work best for engaging HIV+ YMCSM in care services
- To elicit innovative strategies utilized by individual SPNS sites
- To create a space for Outreach Workers to dialogue about the development, implementation and evaluation of their specific recruitment strategies



What Did We Hope to Get Out of the Session?

- A better understanding of how to create effective recruitment strategies from the perspective of Outreach Workers
- To share commonalities/differences among sites' recruitment strategies
- To discuss trends, successes and obstacles for recruiting HIV+ YMCSM to testing and care
- To share best practices and trouble shoot ways to overcome obstacles to the recruitment of HIV+ YMCSM in care



What Was Shared?

Development	Implementation/ Recruitment	Evaluation
Reaching out to community	Print Materials – palm cards	Follow-up with clients
Youth Feedback on recruitment	Safer sex kits	Re-evaluate
Peer-to-peer referrals	Food	Evaluate client behavior changes
Brainstorming	Condom holders	Quantitative
Collaboration with other agencies	Chat line outreach	Evaluate street testing results to social networks testing
Development of incentives	Presence on college campuses and in communities	# of people tested after implementation

What Was Shared?

Development	Implementation/ Recruitment	Evaluation
Meet with Management	MOU's with CBO's	# of contacts
Learn details about population	Group presentations	# retained over time period
Create timelines	Network Referral's	# of positive YMCSM identified
	Internet outreach to market services	Client Satisfaction surveys
	Staff training	Qualitative narratives
	Distribute program literature/information	Client interviews

What Was Shared?

- Conflict occurs with management in attempting to collaborate on implementation/changes to recruitment strategies
- Difficult to implement change/develop innovative ideas that involve collaboration with management
- Outreach workers do not feel involved in development of outreach/recruitment strategies
- Barriers exist between management and front line staff (outreach workers, case managers) who deliver direct client services
- A lack of understanding on the part of management about what it is to be an outreach worker- management has not worked directly with YMCSM



What Questions Remain?

- What are the best recruitment strategies for engaging HIV+ YMCSM in care?
- What are the best ways to develop, implement and evaluate recruitment strategies for HIV+ YMCSM?
- How can outreach workers and case managers better work with program administrators to develop effective recruitment strategies?



What Are the Next Steps?

- Identification of methods to better facilitate working relationships between outreach workers, case managers and program managers/directors
- Dissemination of publications and/or development of a monograph for outreach workers and case managers to develop effective recruitment strategies for HIV+ YMCSM



Barriers to HIV Testing and Engagement in Care for YMSMC

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What Was The Purpose of the Session?

- To understand both “internal” and “external” barriers for YMSM to undergo HIV testing
- To understand both “internal” and “external” barriers for HIV+ YMSMC to engage in care once diagnosed as HIV+
- Brainstorm ways of addressing the identified barriers



What Did We Hope to Get out of the Session?

- A deeper understanding of what these barriers are from the perspective of those who are on the front line
- Observe similarities and differences in barriers across the sites
- Brainstorm possible means of addressing these barriers



What Was Shared?

- **Internal barriers (testing):** fear (of rejection, of family/friends judgment, of being alone) mental health issues, lack of understanding of HIV, inevitability, low self esteem/self worth
- **External barriers (testing):** homophobic providers, organization staff turnover, lack of client centered approach, lack of appropriate pre- and post- test counseling
- **Internal barriers (engagement):** Fear, lack of support, mental health/substance abuse issues, low self esteem
- **External barriers (engagement):** lack of transportation, inconvenient clinic hours/location, provider insensitivity, client expectations too high



What Was Shared?

- **Possible ways to address some of the identified barriers:**
 - ◆ Expanded clinic hours
 - ◆ Hire young staff/youth friendly staff from the community that is being served
 - ◆ Motivational interviewing
 - ◆ Identify social support for clients
 - ◆ Work to create a "safe space" in all clinical environments
 - ◆ Staff need to consistently practice active listening



What Questions remain?

- **What are the best ways to address external barriers in the context of limited resources?**
- **What are the best ways to mitigate internal barriers that really have little to do with HIV?**
- **What is the role of our agencies in confronting structural barriers (i.e. homophobia) that undermine the care continuum?**



What Are the Next Steps?

- **Identify resources to implement possible solutions discussed in meeting**
 - ◆ Which are immediate fixes?
 - ◆ Which are medium-term solutions?
 - ◆ Which are long term solutions?



QUESTIONS?


