

Using *ENGAGED for CHANGE* to Develop a Multicultural Intervention to Reduce Disparities among Sexual and Gender Minorities in Appalachia

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What Is the Purpose of this Study/Review?

In this paper, members of our long-standing community-based participatory research (CBPR) partnership in North Carolina outline and describe the use of a novel community-engaged participatory intervention development process, known as *ENGAGED for CHANGED*, to create the *Appalachian Access Project* intervention. This intervention is designed to increase use of HIV, sexually transmitted infections, hepatitis C virus (HCV), and mpox prevention and care services among diverse gay, bisexual, queer, and other men who have sex with men and transgender and non-binary persons living in rural Appalachia. The developed intervention integrates two evidence-based strategies—community-based peer navigation and mHealth—into a multicultural intervention.

What Is the Problem?

There remains a profound need for the careful description and dissemination of research strategies and methods aligned with CBPR.

What Are the Findings?

Using *ENGAGED for CHANGE* to guide intervention development, we developed the *Appalachian Access Project* intervention. The intervention contains five modules to train gay, bisexual, queer, and other men who have sex with men and transgender and non-binary persons to serve as peer navigators (known as community health leaders) within their social networks. The modules are designed to increase awareness of HIV, sexually transmitted infections, hepatitis C virus, and mpox and their prevention and care; provide guidance on how to promote use of services, including pre-exposure prophylaxis, syringe services, and medically supervised gender-affirming hormone therapy; improve understanding of social determinants of health; and increase ability to effectively communicate and apply social support strategies in person and through mHealth social media.

Who Should Care Most?

CBPR partners, including community members, organization representatives, and academic researchers, who want an authentic participatory process to systematically develop interventions and programming to promote health.

Recommendations for Action

This intervention process can help CBPR partnerships to ensure that interventions and programming are based on the experiences, perspectives, and strengths of all partners, thus meeting the needs and priorities of diverse communities and ensuring that interventions have the greatest potential to be effective.