

# Risk Reduction Service Delivery During the COVID Pandemic to a Marginalized Urban Population in Newark, NJ

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## Background

North Jersey Community Research Initiative (NJCRI) is a non-profit organization in Newark, NJ that provides medical care and support services for highly vulnerable and hard to reach patient populations (e.g. homeless, HIV/AIDS, transgender, MSM, injection drug users, sex workers), 83% of whom are people of color. We are in a unique position to identify critical vulnerabilities and continued risk factors in our communities and patients during pandemics especially identifying HIV, HCV and other STIs and providing support services to this population.

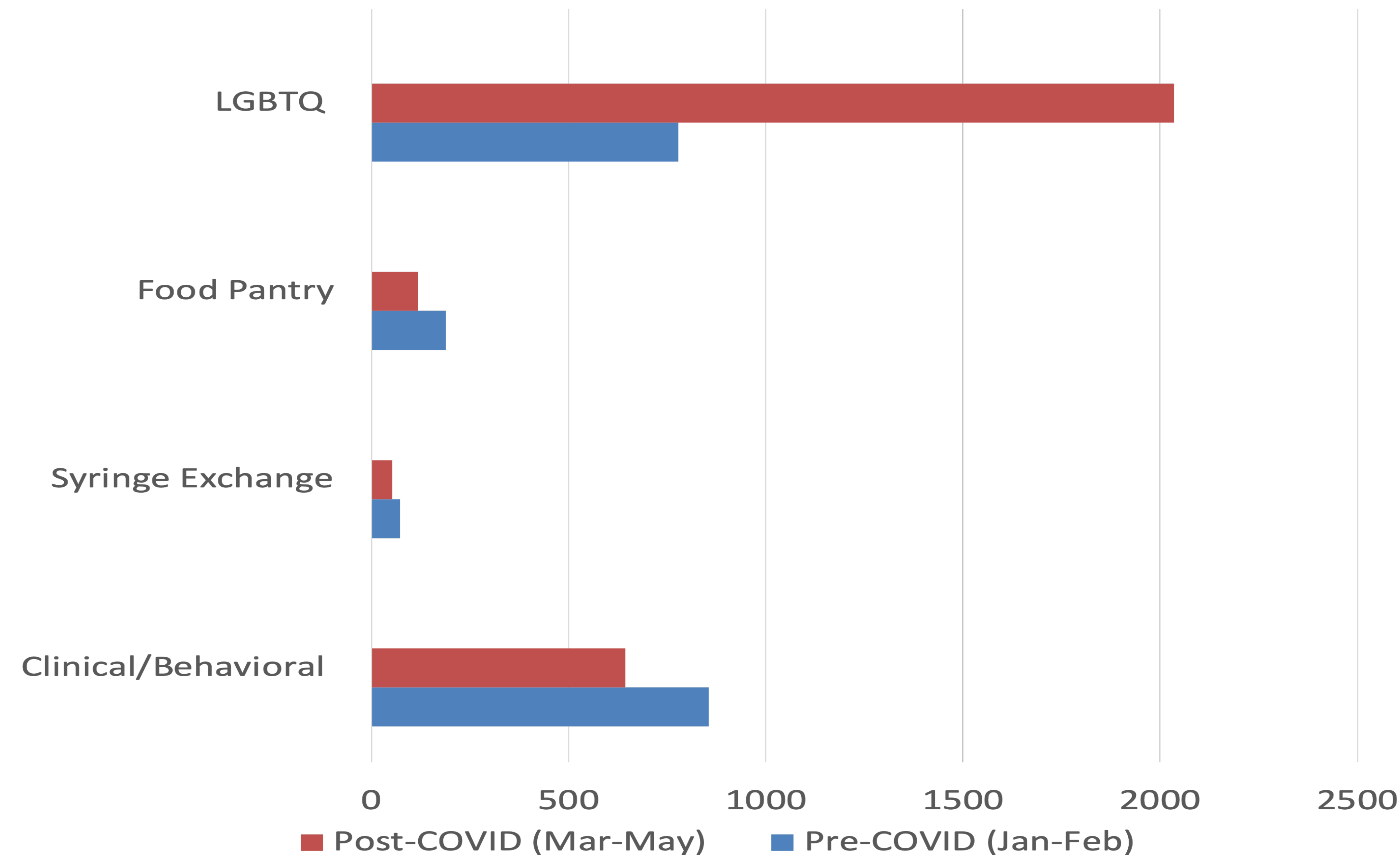


## Methods

We assessed the impact of COVID on HIV, HCV, STI Clinical care, testing prevention, treatment, mental health and substance abuse services and patient retention. We used our EMR data to track patient visits, prevention visits and testing Pre and Post-COVID. Post-COVID we utilized telemedicine and mobile units to continue to provide services as well as self collection kits to the patients for testing. We staggered schedules on site in our outdoor triage center for support services like syringe exchange and food pantry and made an outdoor triage center for all services. Our phone system was routed to providers who assessed and provided medical care through telemedicine and remote lab orders and medication orders were sent via EMR to pharmacies who delivered the medications.



Clients Pre and Post-COVID



## Results

Data from our EMR indicated the following:

### Pre-COVID

- 855 clinical visits including testing behavioral health visits 191
- 38,653 needles distributed for 73 clients in syringe exchange
- 189 clients received food from food pantry
- 779 LGBTQ clients reached

### Post-COVID

- 333 clinical visits including testing behavioral visits 154 - March 2020
- 360 clinical visits including testing behavioral visits 208 - April 2020
- 447 clinical visits including testing behavioral visits 282 - May 2020
- 27,367 needles distributed to 53 clients Syringe exchange during March-May
- 118 clients received food from food pantry from March-May
- 2035 LGBTQ clients reached

## Discussion

In conclusion, we would like to assess and implement best practices Post-COVID to plan for services in the event that we have another wave of COVID. STI, HIV and HCV services and testing can be successfully delivered remotely through an outdoor triage facility in an underserved urban setting. Point of Service testing for both home and outdoor settings will be added to treatment paradigms to better serve the needs of the community.

## Citation

1. North Jersey Community Research Initiative (NJCRI), Electronic Medical Records, January 1, 2020- May 2020, Newark, NJ October 14, 2020