

Tackling the HIV Epidemic in South Florida: Patient Insights on Approaches for HIV Counseling, Testing, and Access to Prevention or Treatment

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INTRODUCTION

The South Florida Metropolitan Statistical Area has for 5 consecutive years recorded the highest HIV incidence in the nation, and its HIV prevalence has been in the top three of all counties. To address the alarming disparity in HIV impact, we developed a survey study to learn about the beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives of persons who accessed services at Latinos Salud, an HIV community-based organization (CBO) in South Florida.

METHODS



The survey was designed by PRIME in collaboration with Latinos Salud and The AIDS Institute to evaluate the participants' perspectives on diverse avenues for HIV counseling, screening, and access to HIV medications for prevention or treatment



Initially, a pilot survey in English or Spanish followed by a structured interview was administered to 10 participants to evaluate the acceptability and feasibility of the survey instrument



Upon qualitative analysis, the survey instrument was finalized and administered by Latinos Salud staff to persons who visited one of two Latinos Salud sites in South Florida in April 2019



Proportional frequencies were tabulated and a chi-square or Fisher's exact test was performed for subgroup analysis along demographic and behavioral factors

FLORIDA

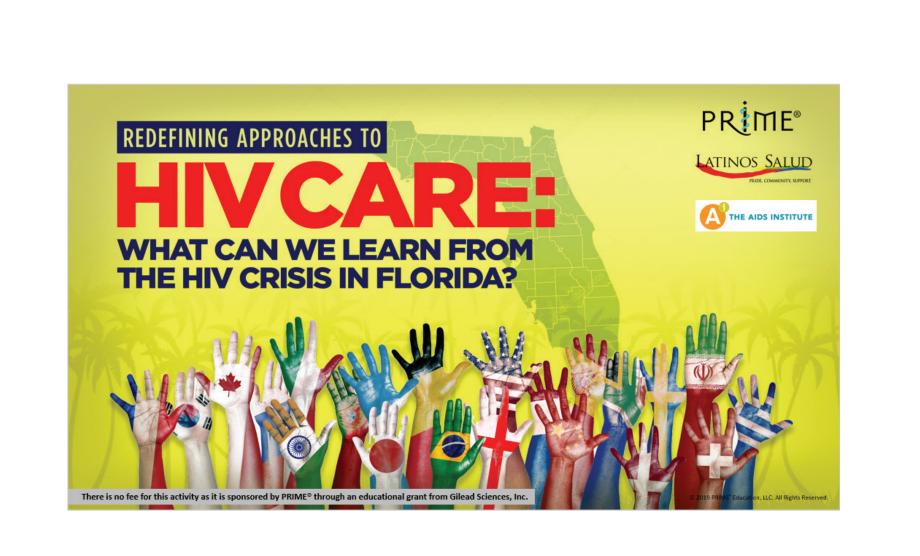






Table 1. Participants' Demographics

Demographic Characteristic	Survey responses (N = 109)
Mean age	37
Median years living in the US	24
Participants not born in the US	68%
Mean number of years living in the US (for participants not born in the US)	15
Male	90%
Female	8%
Transgender	2%
Homosexual, gay, or queer	76%
Bisexual	12%
Heterosexual/straight	7%
Other	5%
Hispanic or Latino (White)	56%
Non-Hispanic or Latino (White)	30%
Mixed or other	11%
Black or African American	2%
Asian	1%
With health Insurance	73%
Without health Insurance	22%
Not sure	5%

Table 2. Participants' HIV-Related Characteristics

HIV-Related Characteristic	Survey responses (N = 109)
Currently living with HIV	30%
Not currently living with HIV	64%
Not sure regarding HIV status	6%
Most recent HIV screening test ^a	
 Within past 6 months 	77%
 Over 6 months ago 	17%
• Never	4%
 Not sure 	3%
Participation in high-risk activities	
 Insertive anal sex without a condom 	34%
 Receptive anal sex without a condom 	29%
• Group sex	14%
• Chemsex	3%
 Injection drug use 	1%
 None of the above 	19%

^aTime since last HIV screening test was assessed only among participants who were not currently living with HIV or did not know their HIV status.

Figure 1. Participants' Views on Strategies for HIV Counseling, Testing, and Access to Medications

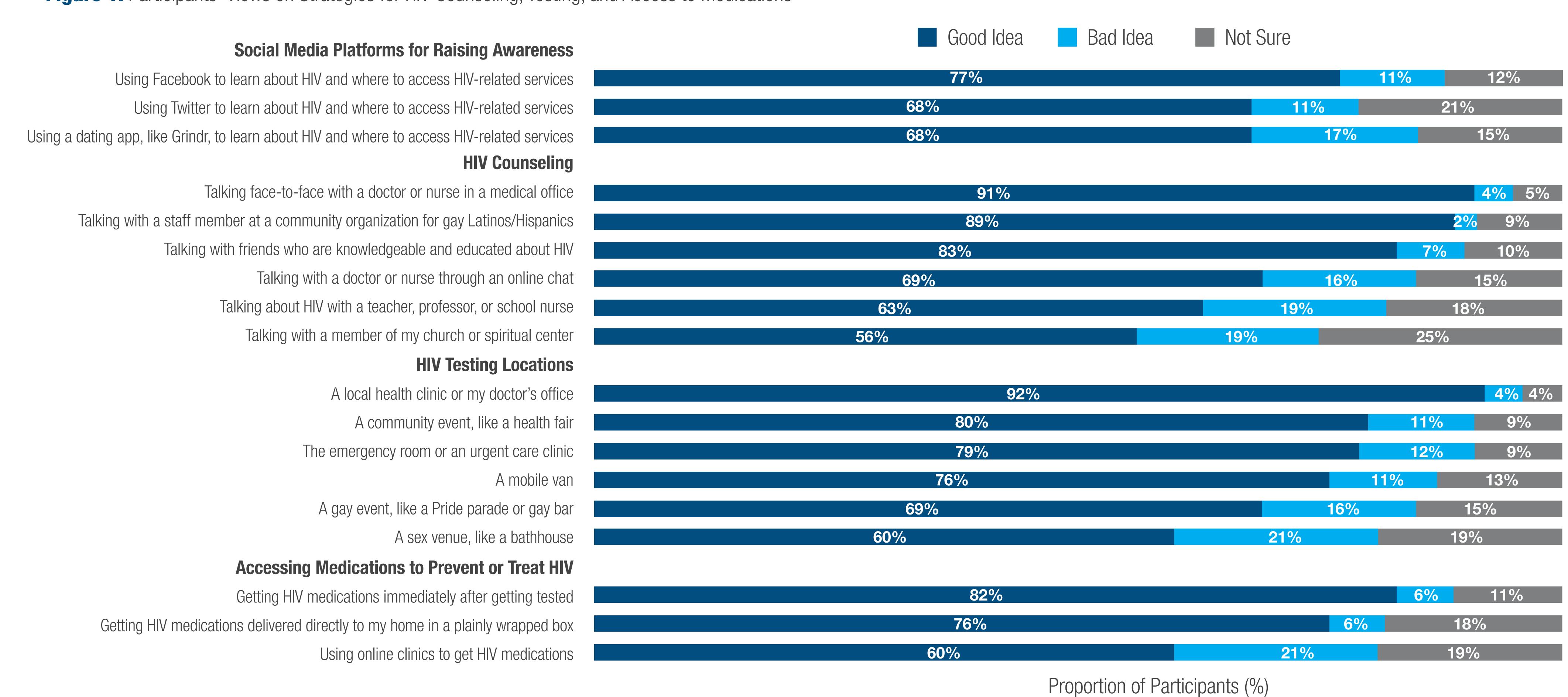
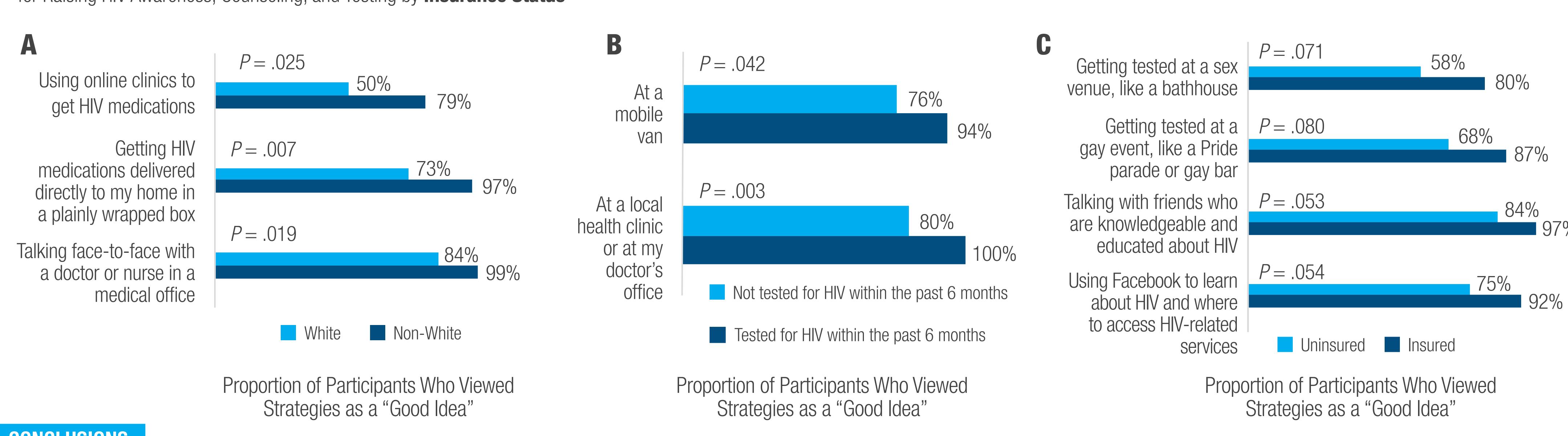


Figure 2. Participants' Views on Strategies for (A) HIV Counseling or Access to Medications by Race/Ethnicity; (B) Strategies for HIV Testing by Testing Status; and (C) Strategies for Raising HIV Awareness, Counseling, and Testing by Insurance Status



CONCLUSIONS

Overall, a majority of participants felt the strategies for HIV counseling, testing, and access to medications were a "good idea." Perceptions of strategies for HIV counseling, testing, and awareness varied by race/ethnicity, testing status, and insurance status. These real-world findings can be used to inform clinic- and communitybased interventions tailored to individual patient characteristics.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Melissa Rodriguez from PRIME Education contributed to administration of the surveys, in collaboration with Latinos Salud staff, and in the preparation of this poster presentation.

DISCLOSURES

The authors of this presentation have no financial relationships to disclose. This project was funded by an educational grant from Gilead Sciences, Inc. The study sponsor did not play a role in the design or analysis of the study or in the decision to submit for presentation. Contact: t.sapir@primeinc.org