“Qualitative Findings that Shape Entry and Retention on the HIV Treatment Cascade”

The HIV Care Continuum (HCC) framework assesses patients at various steps of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) diagnosis and care—from identification of cases, to linkage to care and antiretroviral treatment, to retention in care, and ultimately to viral suppression. The presentation will focus on the results from the qualitative portions of two mixed methods studies whose overall aim was to gain a deeper understanding of the HCC and the potential barriers and facilitators that may operate in nine small cities of southern New England with high HIV prevalence. A total of 84 participants, including public health experts, HIV treatment and social service providers, and people living with HIV, were interviewed in order to understand their perspectives on such barriers and facilitators and seek their recommendations about strategies to improve HCC outcomes.