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Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS
at Yale University

CIRA Talk: “Advancing HIV Testing Strategies for Men Who Have Sex with Men”

Join us in a virtual CIRA Talk featuring presentations of two CIRA-funded pilot projects on strategies to engage men who have sex with men in HIV testing.



DeAnne Turner
University of South Florida
Speaker



Festus Kisa
Q-Initiative, Kenya
Speaker



Gamji Rabiun Abu-Ba'are
University of Rochester
Speaker



Luke Davis
Yale School of Public Health, CIRA
Moderator

Friday, June 7, 2024

10:00 am-11:00 am ET, 2:00 pm-3:00 pm GMT, 5:00 pm-6:00 pm EAT

[Click here to register via Zoom](#)



Contact dini.harsono@yale.edu for questions about this event.

Organized by the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS (CIRA).
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Trace Kershaw, PhD, Principal Investigator.

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OVERVIEW

The Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS at Yale University (CIRA) offers [pilot funding](#) to support preliminary and/or feasibility studies in HIV-related research that will ultimately lead to larger studies evaluating novel interventions or implementation strategies. This CIRA Talk features presentations of two CIRA-funded pilot projects focused on strategies to engage men who have sex with men in HIV testing.

AGENDA

(Event is scheduled in Eastern Time.)

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| 10:00 am-10:05 am | Welcome and Introduction |
| 10:05 am-10:20 am | “Jenga Beshte: Peer Support to Improve the HIV Prevention and Care Continuums” <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DeAnne Turner, University of South Florida• Festus Kisa, Q-Initiative, Kenya |
| 10:20 am-10:35 am | “Formative Research to Adapt a Community-Based HIV Self-Testing Education and Promotion (STEP) Intervention for Men who Have Sex with Men (MSM) Living in Slum Settlements in Ghana” <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gamji Rabiu Abu-Ba’are, University of Rochester |
| 10:35 am-10:55 am | Facilitated discussion and Q&A with audience |
| 10:55 am-11:00 am | Wrap-up and closing |

Presentation 1: “Jenga Beshte: Peer Support to Improve the HIV Prevention and Care Continuums”

DeAnne Turner, University of South Florida and Festus Kisa, Q-Initiative, Kenya

Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men in Kenya (GBMSM) are disproportionately impacted by HIV. This study sought to investigate virtually delivered peer support as a mechanism to improve mental health and HIV-related outcomes among GBMSM in Kenya. This was achieved through two aims: Aim 1: Identify key modifications to an existing intervention (HIVE3) manual and implementation protocol using the ADAPT-ITT model and Aim 2: Determine the implementation feasibility of the adapted intervention. To achieve Aim 1 the team analyzed existing organizational data and conducted 8 focus groups (6 via Zoom, 2 via WhatsApp) to identify key intervention modifications. To determine feasibility of the intervention, we conducted a single arm pilot test of the intervention with 22 MSM in Kenya. Participants were an average age of 23 years (range: 19-27), predominately identified as gay (66.7%), and male (90.5%). While changes in condom use and engagement in care were not noted, statistically significant findings were found in pre-post responses related to emotional support ($p=.009$), perceived quality of peer support (vs. prior peer support received; $p=.026$), and access to peer support services ($p=.035$). Jenga Beshte was found to be feasible and acceptable among pilot participants, with high scores on both AIM and IAM scales. Next steps include preparation of an R01 to test the intervention.

DeAnne Turner, PhD, MPH

Assistant Professor, College of Nursing, University of South Florida

Dr. DeAnne Turner is a tenure track assistant professor in the College of Nursing at the University of South Florida. She earned her PhD in Public Health at the University of South Florida, MPH at Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, and Bachelor of Science in Psychology at the University of Florida. Additionally, she completed an NIMH T32 postdoctoral fellowship at Yale University in the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS. Through her program of research, she seeks to identify inequities in access to care and prevention, ultimately working towards reducing health inequities in populations disproportionately impacted by the HIV epidemic. Prior to academia she served in the United States Peace Corps (Kenya, 2009-2011), worked at a children’s services board, and worked at the Florida Department of Health.

Festus Kisa

Executive Director, Q-Initiative, Kenya

Festus Kisa a Social Worker specializing in designing, costing, implementing, and monitoring interventions that center LGBTIQ+ persons living in peri-urban and rural parts of Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu, and West Pokot counties in Kenya. Over the past ten years, our interventions have evolved from providing LGBTQ specific sexuality education to service provision and advocacy for reproductive health for queer women, intersex trans and gender non-conforming persons, HIV prevention and treatment for gay, bisexual, and men who have sex with men as well as mental health and wellness for the LGBTIQ+ community. Our work is collaborative and with diverse partnerships spanning from human state and non-state actors, researchers, artists, and other non-governmental organizations situated across local, national, regional, and global levels. Festus’ work adopts multisectoral approaches that use an intersectional feminist lens to change the narrative about LGBTIQ+ persons and create social change.

Presentation 2: “Formative Research to Adapt a Community-Based HIV Self-Testing Education and Promotion (STEP) Intervention for Men who Have Sex with Men (MSM) Living in Slum Settlements in Ghana”

Gamji Rabiou Abu-Ba'are, University of Rochester

Abstract forthcoming.

Gamji Rabiou Abu-Ba'are, PhD, MA

Assistant Professor of Nursing & Public Health, School of Nursing, University of Rochester

Gamji Rabiou Abu-Ba'are is an assistant professor in nursing and public health and the inaugural Harriet J. Kitzman Endowed Fellow in Global Health Research at the University of Rochester. He is the principal investigator of the Behavioral, Sexual, and Global Health Lab that operates out of the University of Rochester School of Nursing, and Jama'a Action in Accra, Ghana. As a global health and behavioral scientist, urban planner, and health geographer, Abu-Ba'are seeks to better understand the role of place and intersectional stigma on HIV and sexual health outcomes. His research develops and refines interventions to reduce intersectional stigma and optimize outcomes among HIV high-risk populations in socially-vulnerable communities in Sub-Saharan Africa, Western Europe, and the United States. His work employs a community participatory approach where he works closely with faculty at the University of Ghana School of Public Health and community-based organizations in Ghana, Nigeria, and Western Europe.

Moderator

Luke Davis, MD, MS

Associate Professor of Epidemiology (Microbial Diseases) and of Medicine (Pulmonary), Yale School of Public Health, Yale School of Medicine, CIRA

Luke Davis is a pulmonary/critical care physician and epidemiologist using translational research and implementation science to improve diagnostic evaluation and case finding for tuberculosis (TB), the leading cause of infectious death worldwide. He teaches a graduate course on implementation science and mentors students at the Yale School of Public Health, and is involved in several international research training programs focused on implementation science. He is a Yale Medicine physician, and attends in the Medical Intensive Care Unit and the Winchester TB Clinic at Yale-New Haven Hospital, caring for patients and their families and teaching medical students, residents, and fellows. He serves as scientific advisor for the Center Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS (CIRA)'s international research activities, and a co-chair of the Yale Global HIV/AIDS Research Network (GARNER).