

Project Engage 2.0: Engaging Gay “Community” Activism for Syphilis Prevention

Generic Information Collection Request under OMB #0920-0840

Section B: Supporting Statement

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1. Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods

We plan to recruit approximately 64 black/African American MSM (BMSM) to discuss the notion of community and its relevance to sexual health activism. The sample will be stratified by city (New Orleans and Washington, DC) and age (18-34, 35+). In each city, we will target recruiting approximately sixteen black/African American MSM age 18-34 and sixteen age 35+.

Sampling Methods

The overall sampling strategy for this study is specifically designed for qualitative analysis. Recruiting a probability sample is unnecessary for this type of research and findings could be misleading to the broader scientific community and the general public. We intend to use a purposive sample that is designed to ensure that a wide range of experiences are available.

Sampling Plan BMSM

This study will utilize purposive sampling to select BMSM to participate in the study. Purposive sampling is based on strong theoretical reasons for the choice of cases to be included in the sample. Rather than using probabilistic methods (i.e., random selection with known, non-zero chances of selection for each unit in the population) to generate a sample, non-probability sampling requires researchers to use their subjective judgments, drawing on theory (i.e., the academic literature) and practice (i.e., the experience of the researcher and the evolutionary nature of the research process). Unlike probability sampling, the goal is not to achieve objectivity in the selection of the sample, or necessarily attempt to make statistical inferences from the sample being studied to the wider population of interest. Instead, a qualitative research design that includes purposive sampling, tends to be interested in the intricacies of the sample being studied. To select a representative probability sample, it would be necessary to find or build a sampling frame of BMSM in the cities of interest, which is not currently available and -- if feasible -- would require a long lead time. Therefore, using a non-representative sample shortens the period of data collection and allows for quick analysis of results, thus meeting the research goals. Exhibit B1.1 shows the sampling targets BMSM.

Potential respondents will be screened for eligibility until each target is met in each city. During data collection, study staff will assess whether adjustments to these proposed targets are needed in order to

reach 64 respondents. The following inclusion and exclusion criteria will be used to determine eligibility BMSM to participate in this study:

MSM participant inclusion criteria:

Eligible respondents will be:

- 18 years or older
- Male
- Non-Hispanic, black/African American
- Had oral or anal sex with a male in the past 12 months
- Lives in the metropolitan statistical areas of Washington, DC or New Orleans, LA
 - For Washington, DC: Resident of either Montgomery County, District of Columbia, Prince George's County, Arlington County, or Alexandria County.
 - For New Orleans, LA: Resident of either Orleans Parish, Jefferson Parish, or St. Bernard Parish

MSM participant exclusion criteria:

Respondents will be excluded from the study if they are:

- 17 years or younger
- Identify as female or transgender
- Not non-Hispanic, black/African American
- Unable to converse easily in English
- Have not had at least one reported instance of oral or anal sex with a male in the past 12 months
- Are from an area outside of the MSA for the target cities.

Recruitment strategies are described below:

Recruitment of BMSM

The recruitment strategy will largely rely on two methods: community-based organization led recruitment and recruitment via social media.

1) Community-based organization recruitment

NNPHI will work will contract two local partners in both New Orleans and Washington DC (one in each) to oversee recruitment (as well as to provide facilities in which the focus groups will be conducted). Priority will be given to local partners listed by interview participants during the first round of Project Engage. Otherwise, local partners with services targeted at black/African American MSM will be selected. Selected local partners will be asked to recruit participants both actively, i.e. contacting and speaking with potential participants (or working with other local partners to do so), and passively by

hanging/making available provided flyers with project details and NNPHI contact information. Active recruitment by the community partners will consist of attending venues and approaching potentially eligible respondents and providing them with an information flyer that states a telephone number for study staff and basic information regarding the study (see **Attachment 3a and 3b**). All recruitment materials indicate the voluntary nature of the study and will include information about the purpose, target audience, time commitment, notification that it is a recorded telephone interview, contact information, and the token of appreciation. Staff will then conduct a brief eligibility screener (see **Attachment 5a**) using questions included in the outreach recruitment procedures and, if eligible, request contact information to be provided to recruitment staff to schedule participation in focus group at a later date. If eligibility screening is not possible during active recruitment, recruiters will collect limited contact information (e.g., first name, initial of last name, phone number, email address) in order for recruitment support staff to contact and screen potential respondents on the phone at a more convenient time. If contact information is not collected from a potential participant at the recruitment venue, the recruitment support staff will encourage the individual to use the flyer (**Attachment 3a**) to contact recruitment staff at a later time for eligibility screening.

2) *Passive Recruitment via Social Media*

NNPHI will also recruit via social media, relying largely on dating apps targeting MSM such as:

- Scruff
- Adam4Adam
- Jack’d
- Growlr
- Daddy Hunt

The information advertising the study on these apps will be the same as the flyers: the study purpose, target audience, time commitment, notification that it is a recorded focus group, local partner contact information, and the token of appreciation. These are the same study materials used for active recruitment (**Attachment 3a and 3b**).

Exhibit B1.1: Summary of Recruitment Targets

Age	New Orleans	Washington DC
18-34	16	16

35+	16	16
Total Desired Number of Participants		64

2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

Recruitment staff will be provided and instructed to utilize recruitment flyers to garner participation in the study (**Attachment 3a**). Recruitment flyers will provide potential respondents with information about the study and a phone number to call to be screened for study eligibility. After completion of each screening/recruitment session, NNPHI staff will use limited contact information (e.g., name, email, telephone number) to set up appointments to complete the informed consent process and schedule participation in focus group. Limited contact information will be kept in a secured location (locked in filing cabinet in locked office when not in use). At the time of each focus group, staff will review the study procedures, after which respondents will be read the informed consent (**Attachment 4**).

The following data collection instruments will be used in this study:

Eligibility Screeners for BMSM: Eligibility screeners will be utilized to identify eligible respondents and take approximately 5 minutes to complete (**Attachment 5a**). If eligible, request contact information to be provided to NNPHI staff to schedule participation in the appropriate focus group at a later date. If eligibility screening is not possible during active recruitment, recruiters will collect limited contact information (e.g., first name, initial of last name, phone number, email address) in order for recruitment support staff or NNPHI staff to contact and screen potential respondents on the phone at a more convenient time. If contact information is not collected from a potential participant at the recruitment venue, the recruitment support staff will encourage the individual to use the recruitment flyer (**Attachment 3b**) to contact NNPHI staff at a later time for eligibility screening.

Focus Groups: All focus groups will be conducted by NNPHI study staff using one focus group guide for all respondents (**Attachments 5b**). The focus group guide will focus largely on qualitative open-ended questions about their perceptions of community, including their understanding of the gay community and the black gay community. Open-ended questions will allow respondents to respond freely of their own accord. The NNPHI project team member will guide the discussion with probing

questions as needed. All focus group data will be recorded by study staff with the consent of focus group respondents. Respondents will be reminded by the interviewer not to use full names or identifying information during the focus group. Study staff will perform the transcription of all audio-recordings and maintain all transcripts on password protected/encrypted laptops.

Transcripts will be coded and analyzed using the NVivo qualitative data analysis software program. Information from the structured response questions will be analyzed using the Microsoft Excel and SPSS software programs. Focus group transcripts, NVivo files, and other structured response data files will be stored on and edited from a CDC-approved encrypted USB drive plugged into a standalone, non-networked computer without Internet access. Only project staff will have access to the records, study documents, and data.

3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with No Response

We will use the following procedures to maximize cooperation and to achieve the desired response rate:

- All recruitment materials indicate the voluntary nature of the study and participation is due in part to interest in the study and participation from BMSM.
- A token of appreciation of \$50, in the form of a Visa gift card, will be provided to respondents upon completion of focus group.

4. Tests of Procedures or Methods to be Undertaken

Our research team includes experts with experience conducting research with community partners, Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) populations and qualitative research, including screening and interview development and testing. NNPHI staff will conduct pretesting of the screening tool and interviews on at least three mock respondents to assess question wording, skip patterns, question sensitivity, and overall flow of the interview and to estimate response burden for each respondent. Non-CDC members of the research team will be responsible for recruiting respondents and collecting the data in the three cities as well as for generating transcripts that contain no PII.

5. Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data

Exhibit B5.1 below lists the project team members who were consulted on the aspects of research design and those who will be collecting and analyzing the data. Please note: The CDC staff are primarily

responsible for providing technical assistance in the design and implementation of the research; assisting in the development of the research protocol and data collection instruments for CDC Project Determination and local IRB reviews; working with investigators to facilitate appropriate research activities; and analyzing data and presenting findings at meetings and in publications. The data are primarily qualitative in nature and will be analyzed accordingly.

The CDC staff will be non-engaged in the direct collection of information; CDC staff will neither collect data from nor interact with research respondents (**Attachment 7**). Data will be collected by members of partner project staff listed. No individual identifiers will be linkable to collected data, and no individually identifiable private information will be shared with or accessible by CDC staff. All members of the research team will work together to analyze the data and generate reports containing summaries of the findings.

Exhibit B5.2: Statistical Consultants

Team Member	Organization	Email
Monique Carry	CDC	Kju8@cdc.gov
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