

## Community Agencies and their Link to HIV Prevention

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**Project Description:** Most HIV prevention studies focus on individual-level predictors of risk, while failing to address the social conditions that determine the extent to which people can avoid risk. Social factors often considered distal to HIV infection - such as social isolation, discrimination, and lack of social capital – can be impacted structurally within the context of HIV prevention efforts.

The goals of the proposed study are to assess the impact and meaning of an innovative peer volunteer activity on participating service providers and agencies and to investigate the extent to which involvement with this peer volunteer program led agency staff to reevaluate or change aspects of their agency prevention service delivery or content; and to examine the link between community involvement and HIV risk for HIV+ IDUs from the service provider perspective.

**Significance:** With data from this study, we will be able to provide insight into how agency providers characterize the structural prevention needs of HIV+ individuals. This data will advance knowledge in an area where very little research has been done, especially with IDUs. This study will assist in the development of a conceptual model outlining the extent to which HIV prevention and care service delivery can be impacted by structural interventions that create collaboration between client and provider. This research will provide vital information necessary to launch a structural prevention intervention that focuses on providers in ASOs, their role, and their impact on HIV prevention with HIV-positive populations.

**Project Ending Date:** December 2004