



Effective Health Care

Mobile HIV Testing Units in Neighborhoods

Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- The topic, *Mobile HIV Testing Units in Neighborhoods*, is not feasible for a full systematic review due to the limited data available for a review at this time.
- *Mobile HIV Testing Units in Neighborhoods* could potentially be considered for new research in comparative effectiveness.

Topic Description

Nominator(s): Individual

Nomination Summary: The nominator is interested in the comparative effectiveness mobile testing units in neighborhoods to help people know their status. This topic was scoped to focus on mobile testing units for HIV.

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Population(s): Individuals who do not know their HIV serostatus

Intervention(s): Mobile HIV testing units in neighborhoods

Comparator(s): Health clinic based HIV testing or no testing at all

Outcome(s): Identification of HIV positive individuals, resulting in the proper treatment and counselling

Key Questions from Nominator: No questions listed, nomination stated that mobile testing units should be brought to the people in their neighborhoods. The topic was scoped by the Scientific Resource Center staff and the following key question was developed:

What is the effectiveness of mobile HIV testing units in identifying HIV positive individuals?

Considerations

- The topic meets Effective Health Care (EHC) Program appropriateness and importance criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)
- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is the virus that causes acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), a condition in which there is a progressive failure of the immune system, leaving the body vulnerable to life-threatening opportunistic infections and cancers. In the US, HIV is spread mainly by

having sex with or sharing drug injection equipment with someone who is infected with HIV. Almost 1 in 6 people living with HIV in the US is unaware of their infection.

- HIV can affect people of all ages, races, and socioeconomic statuses; however, by risk group, gay and bisexual men of all races remain the population most severely affected by HIV. By race/ethnicity, Blacks/African-Americans experience the most severe burden of HIV, compared with other races and ethnicities. Hispanics/Latinos are also disproportionately affected by HIV. A range of interrelated social and economic conditions can limit access to HIV testing and contribute to HIV disparities.
- A scan of the literature produced limited results relevant to this topic. Most of the literature identified addressed mobile HIV testing outside of the United States (US). Only three published studies were identified, which examined the use of mobile HIV testing units in the US.
- Given that the majority of the evidence is from studies trying to reach rural populations outside the US, with potentially limited generalizability to the US, it does not appear that an AHRQ systematic review is feasible at this time.
- Additional research on the effectiveness of mobile HIV testing units in neighborhoods could be an area of new research. This topic has the potential for having a significant health impact by encouraging more individuals to be educated and to get tested and treated, especially individuals from high-risk populations.