



U=U – A Destigmatizing Message Inconsistently Communicated by Clinicians to PLHIV (Abstract 223)

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Conflict of Interest Statement

- No actual/perceived conflict of interest



Undetectable=Untransmittable (U=U)

“The science really does verify and validate U=U.”

Anthony Fauci, MD
Director, NIAID/NIH
September 2017



SCIENCE: HPTN-052... Partner... Opposites Attract...



Survey Methodology/Content

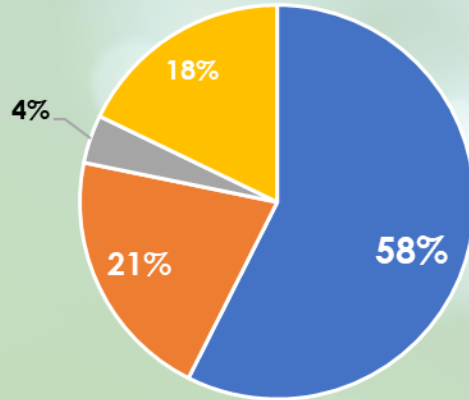
- 45-question survey to gauge clinician perspectives on HIV, HBV, and HCV clinical management
- Fielded online December 2017-March 2018
- Two survey questions specific to U=U
 - Knowledge about the U=U message
 - *“Are you aware that a person living with HIV who has an undetectable viral load for ≥ 6 months have effectively no risk of sexually transmitting HIV?”*
 - Integration of U=U message into clinical practice
 - *“Do you communicate the U=U message to your HIV-positive patients with an undetectable viral load for ≥ 6 months?”*



Survey Respondents

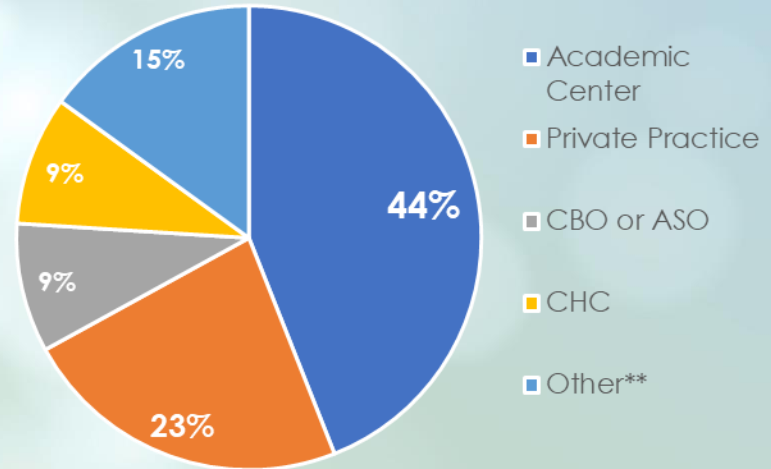
- 1,012 respondents from 35 countries

■ Physician ■ Nurse/NP ■ Physician Assistant ■ Other*



* Psychologist, pharmacist

Clinical Practice Settings



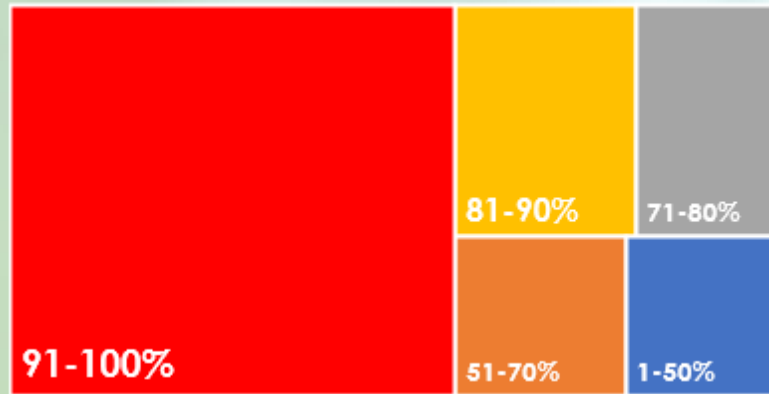
** Correctional facility, health department



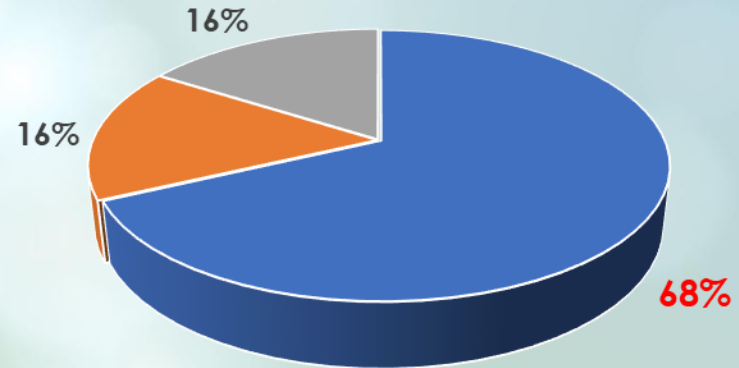
Survey Respondents (continued)

Physician*-Reported Number of HIV+ Patients on ART

- 1-50%
- 51-70%
- 71-80%
- 81-90%
- 91-100%



Physician*-Reported VL Levels for HIV+ Patients



- VL <50 copies/mL
- VL >50 copies/mL
- VL N/A

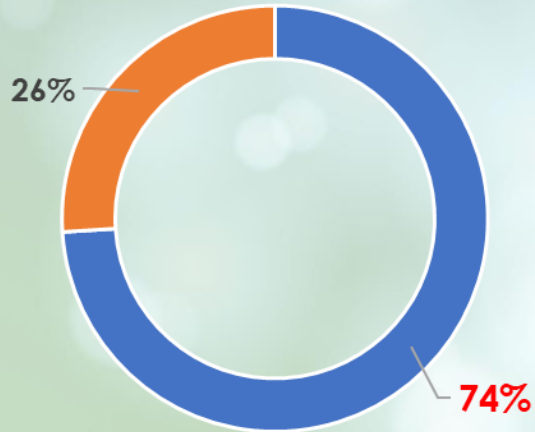
* Physician n=587



U=U Knowledge

Physicians – “Yes”

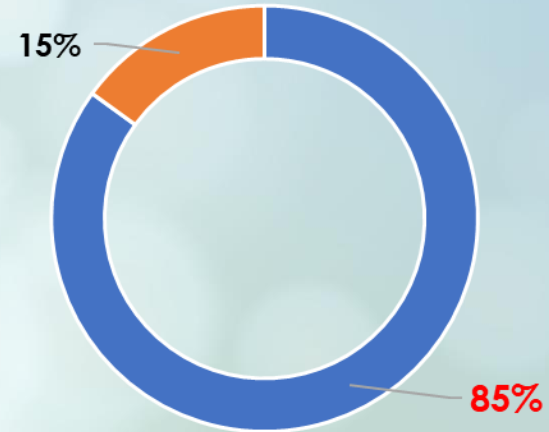
* Physician n=587



■ Yes ■ No

Nurses/Nurse Practitioners – “Yes”

* Nurse/Nurse Practitioner n=216



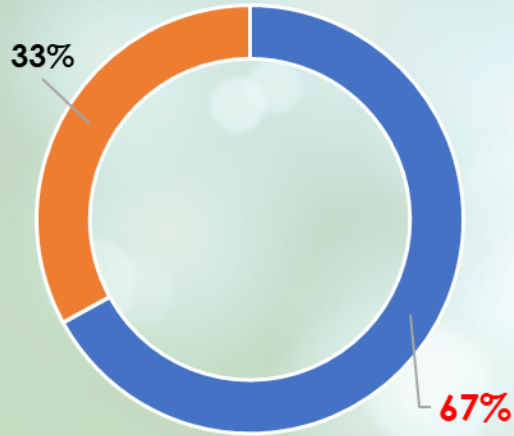
■ Yes ■ No

Physicians who Responded “No” – Africa (42%), Asia (24%), Europe (17%), Latin America (12%), North America (5%)



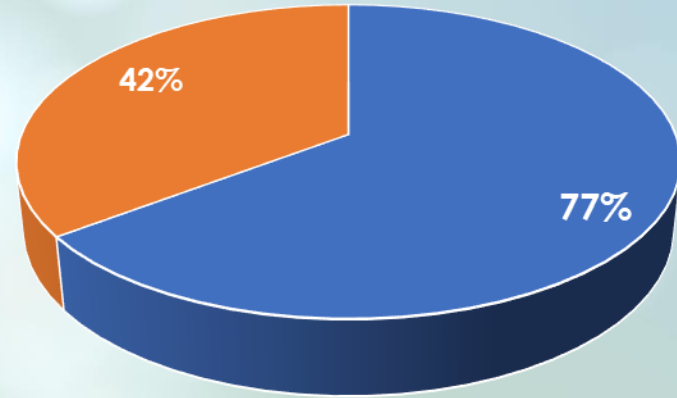
U=U Communication

Physicians – “Yes”



■ Yes ■ No

ID vs PCP – “Yes”



■ ID ■ PCP

* Physician n=587



Clinician Rationale for Not Communicating U=U Message

- **“U=U negates personal responsibility.”**
 - U=U says nothing about personal responsibility
- **“Patient abandons treatment but continues thinking U=U.”**
 - More related to misinformed provider-patient communication
- **“Being undetectable reduces risk, but there is still a risk.”**
 - Undetectable viral load reduces sexual transmission risk to ZERO; there is not one case of linked sexual transmission of HIV when a positive partner is on ART and viral load is suppressed
- **“Adherence is not 100%.”**
 - True, but 100% ART adherence is not required to maintain viral suppression (data suggest modern ART requires ~90% adherence)



Conclusions

- U=U is a simple but hugely important campaign based on a solid foundation of scientific evidence*
- U=U is not consistently integrated into practice by clinicians (notably PCPs); HIV-positive patients with undetectable viral loads are thus not hearing message
- Education/support regarding science behind U=U and how to communicate message to HIV-positive patients with undetectable viral loads is needed

* *Lancet*, November 2017



Acknowledgements

- IAPAC: Ben Young, Paula Munderi
- Prevention Access Campaign: Bruce Richman
- 1,012 clinician-respondents

Let's Spread the Good News: – U=U