



Knowledge Is Pleasure: The Relationship between Awareness of “Undetectable=Untransmittable” and Sexual Satisfaction among Gay, Bisexual, and Other Men Who Have Sex with Men in Lima, Perú,

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No financial relationships to
disclose.

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Outline

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1. Positionality
2. Background
3. Methods
4. Results
5. Conclusions
6. Next Steps

Positionality



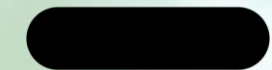
U.S. citizen



Queer/LGBTQIA+



Jewish



Not LWH



Medical Student

**with additional training in sexuality education and counseling*

Background

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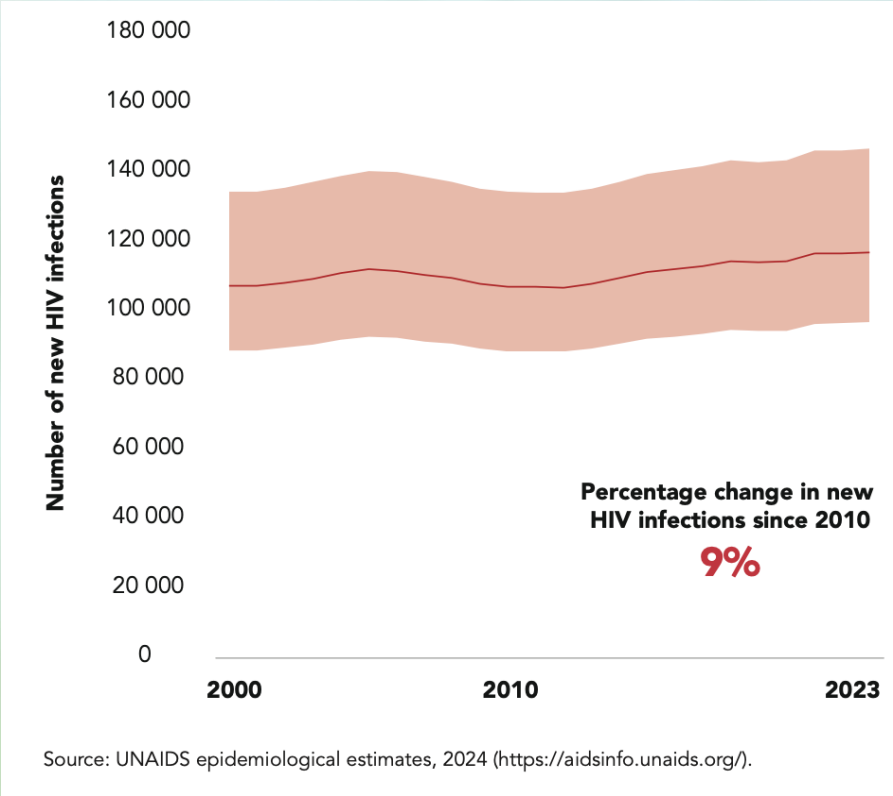
New HIV diagnoses in Latin America are trending up



Background

New HIV diagnoses in Latin America are trending up

Numbers of new HIV infections, Latin America, 2000-2023



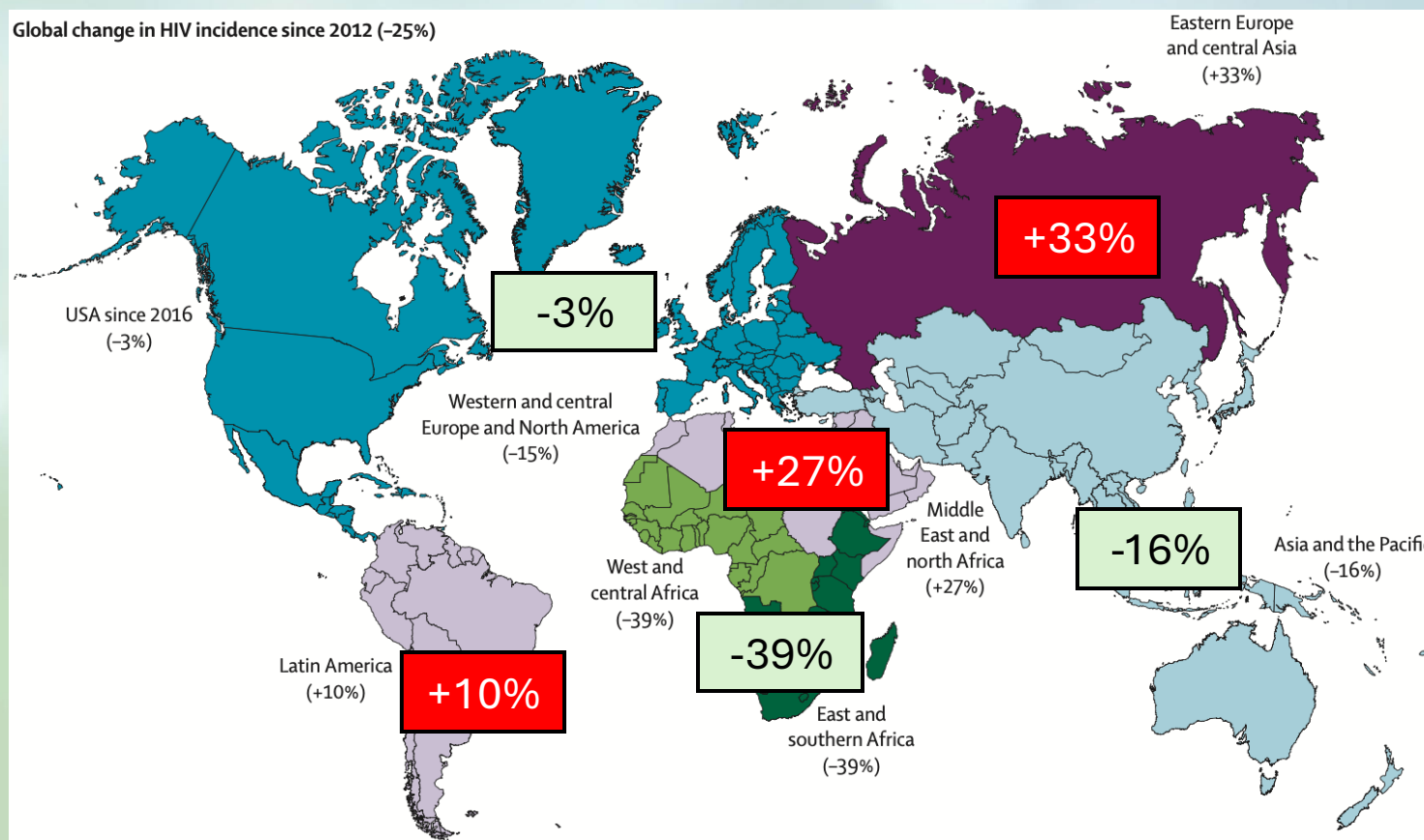
Background

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...while much of the rest of the world is trending down

UNAIDS 2022 estimates of percent change in HIV incidence since 2012

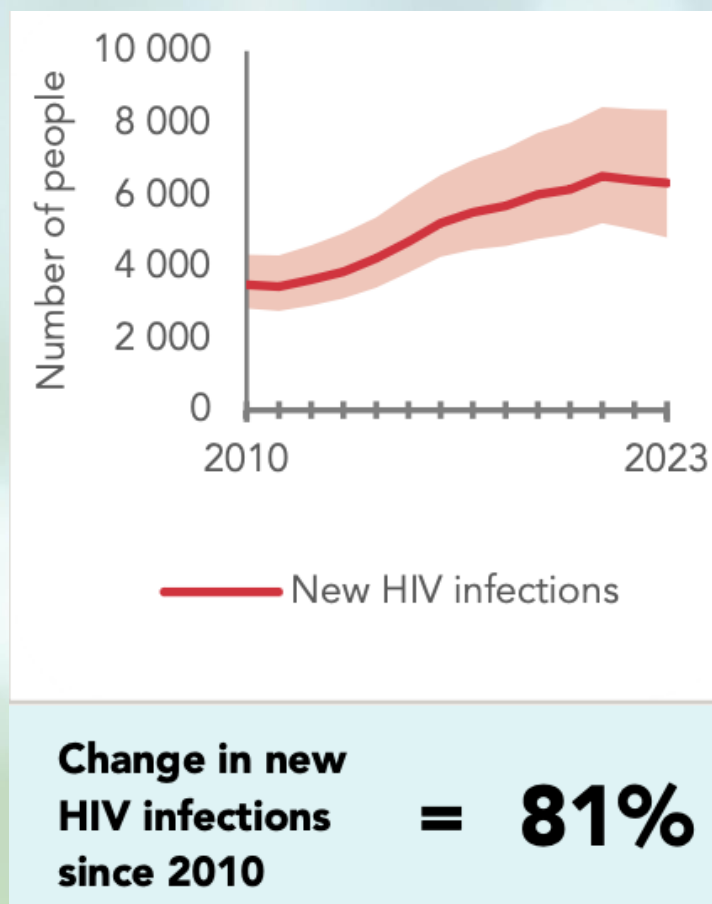


Background

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The same upwards trend is reflected within Perú

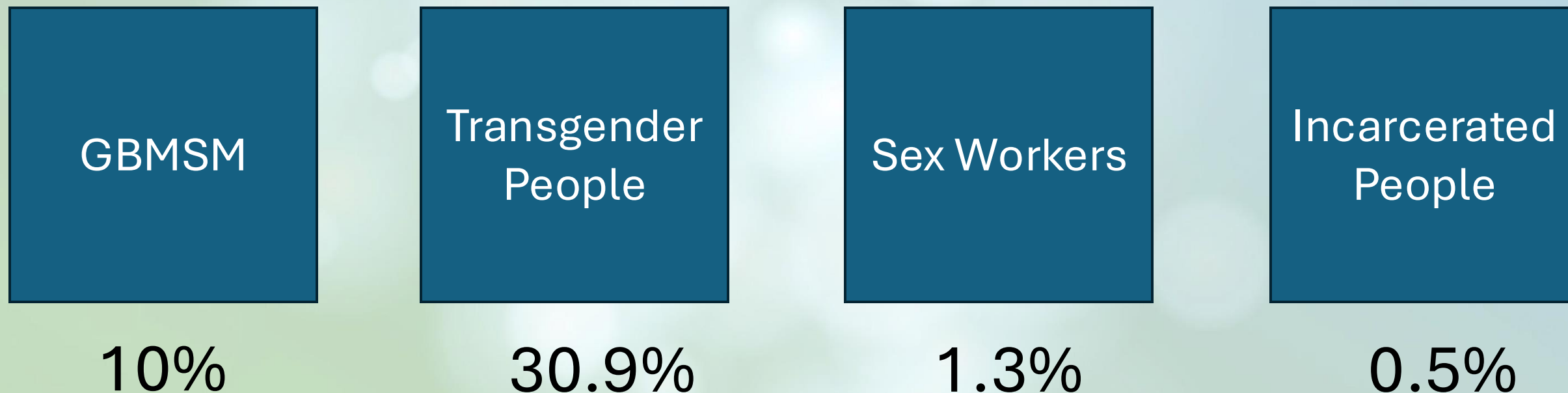


Background

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In Perú, HIV is largely concentrated among



Background

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But are PLWH being connected to care?

Only 47% of newly
diagnosed GBMSM linked to
care within 90 days

Background

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Of those in care...

82.2% of GBMSM had
achieved viral suppression
(VL<200)

Background

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Of those in care...

73.2% of GBMSM had
achieved viral suppression
(VL<50)

Background

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Why does this matter?

Background

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U=U

UNDETECTABLE = UNTRANSMITTABLE

Background

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INDETECTABLE = INTRANSMISIBLE
¿SABÉS QUÉ SIGNIFICA?



El test de VIH
permite acceder a un diagnóstico
y tratamiento adecuado



**Mantener la adherencia
al tratamiento de VIH**
disminuye la carga viral a
niveles indetectables



Cuando la carga viral del VIH es
indetectable, no se transmite
el virus por vía sexual

**INDETECTABLE ES
INTRANSMISIBLE**



**La información permite el
acceso a una excelente
calidad de vida**



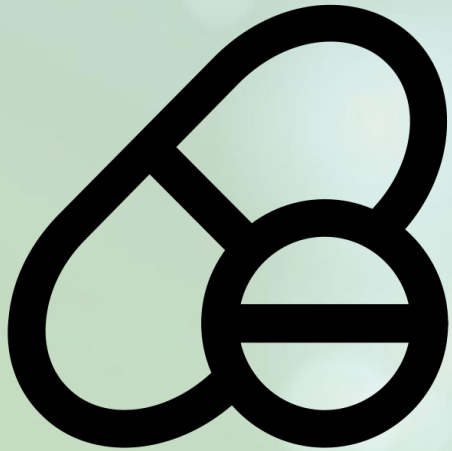
CRUZ ROJA
ARGENTINA

cruzroja.org.ar

@cruzrojaarg

Background

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Overall/HIV-related Health

Why does this matter?



Mental Health/Wellbeing



Sexual Health/Pleasure

Objectives



1. Assess knowledge, beliefs, and experiences related to U=U
2. Evaluate the relationship between knowledge of U=U, viral load, and sexual behavior
3. Describe the relationship between knowledge of U=U, sexual behavior, and sexual pleasure

Methods

Study Design

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Design



Cross-Sectional
Online Survey

Setting



Lima, Perú
Urban

Population



GBMSM
LWH

Time



Oct. 2024 –
Jan. 2025

Methods

Measures – Exposure Variable

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Awareness of U=U

Included having previously heard of the **term** “I=I” or the **concept** that a person with an undetectable viral load cannot transmit HIV to a sexual partner.

Methods

Measures – Outcome Variables

Demographics

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Methods

Measures – Outcome Variables

Demographics

HIV history and linkage to care

Time since diagnosis

Location of treatment

ART adherence

Viral load



Methods

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Measures – Outcome Variables

Demographics

HIV history and linkage to care

Sexual Behavior (last 3 months)

Partner type(s)

Number of partners

Transactional sex

Group sex

Location(s) of sex

SDU

etc...

Methods

Measures – Outcome Variables

Demographics

HIV history and linkage to care

Sexual Behavior

Sexual Satisfaction



Methods

Measures

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New Sexual Satisfaction Scale (NSSS)

20-item Likert scale (*1 = not at all satisfied, 2 = a little..., 3 = moderately..., 4 = very..., 5 = extremely...*)

Scores range from 20-100 (partnered)

Higher scores = Higher sexual satisfaction

Validated in Spanish and in people of various sexual orientations

Sexual Satisfaction

Citations:
Milhausen et al, 2019
Strizzi et al. 2016
Stulhofer et al. 2010

Methods

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Analysis

Descriptive statistics of variables

Bivariate analysis: sociodemographic correlates of U=U awareness

Poisson regression: association of U=U awareness with sexual behaviors

T-tests: differences in NSSS scores based on sexual behaviors and U=U awareness

Results

Overall Sample

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N= 310
participants

Results

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Overall Sample Characteristics

33 years old
(IQR 28-40)



76% Mestizo



90% Peruvian



93% Cisgender Men



84% Gay



53% diagnosed
>5 years ago



59% $\leq 2^\circ$ School



64% w/ income



55% living w/ family



70% single



Results

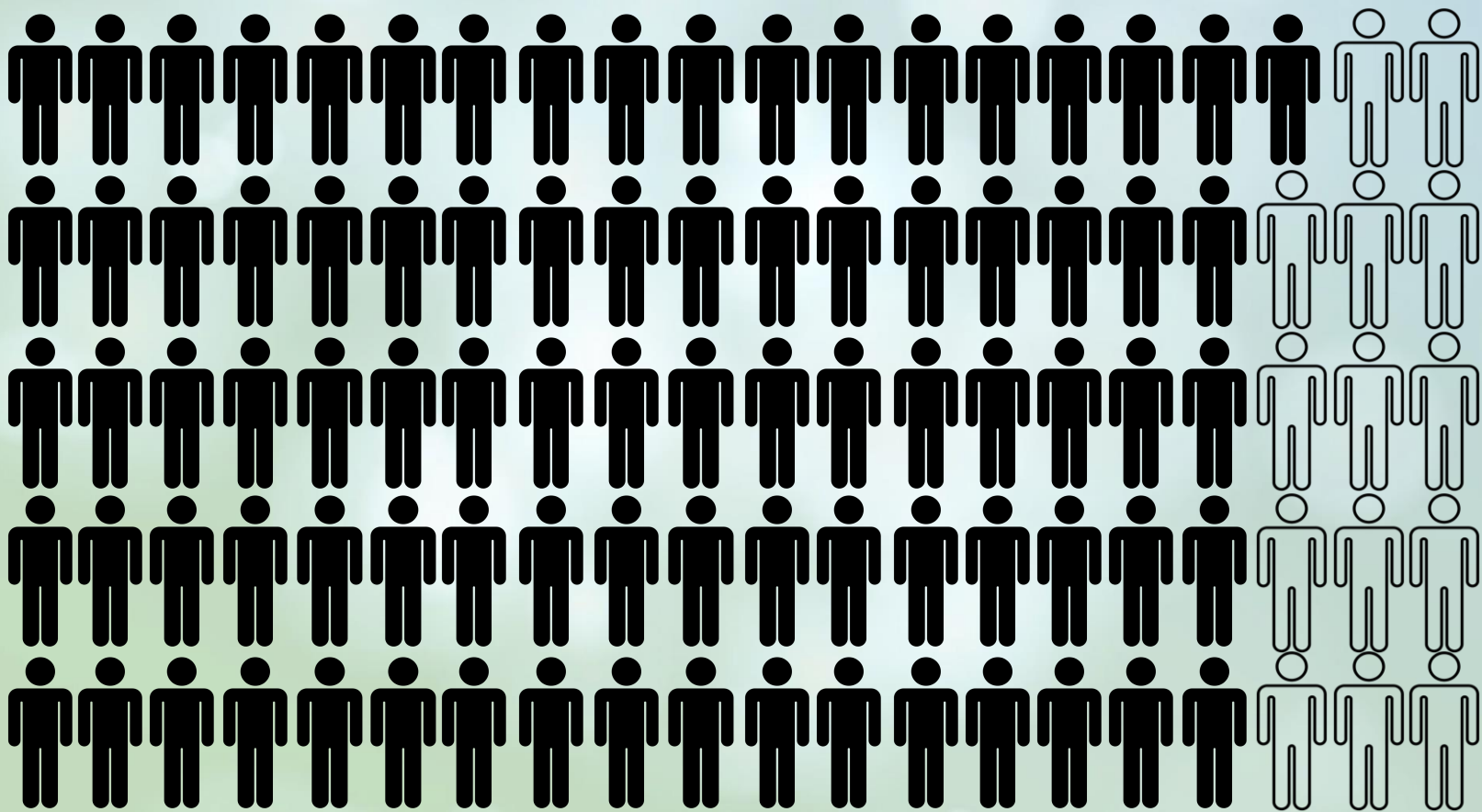
U=U Awareness

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Prior Awareness of U=U

85.8% (266/310)



Results

U=U Awareness

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Most common initial source of information



Healthcare Provider
39.1% (104/310)



NGO/Community Center
18.8% (50/310)



Online
18.4% (49/310)

Results

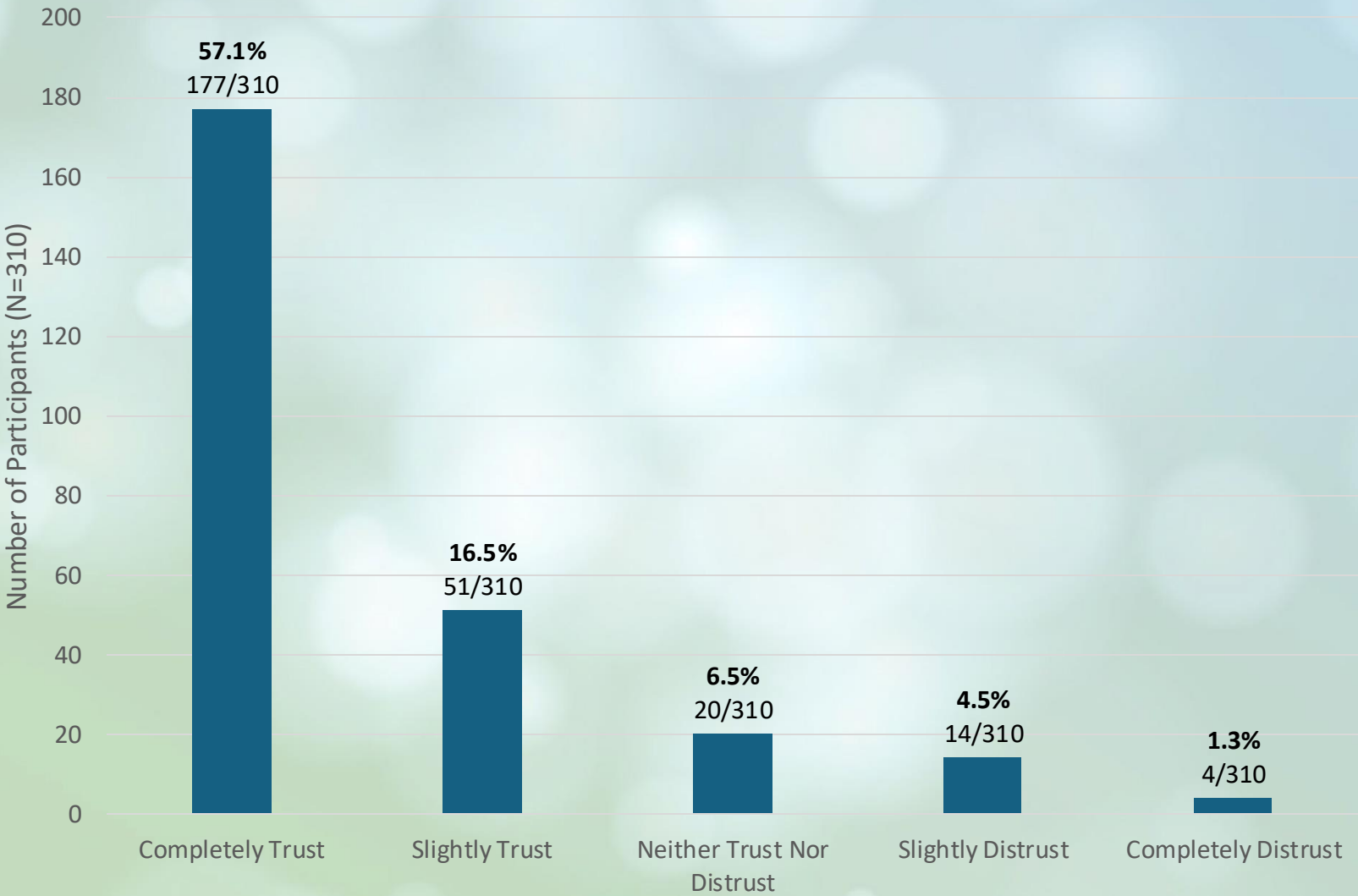
U=U Awareness

Among participants WITH prior U=U awareness

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Level of Trust in U=U



Results

U=U Awareness

Among participants WITH prior U=U awareness

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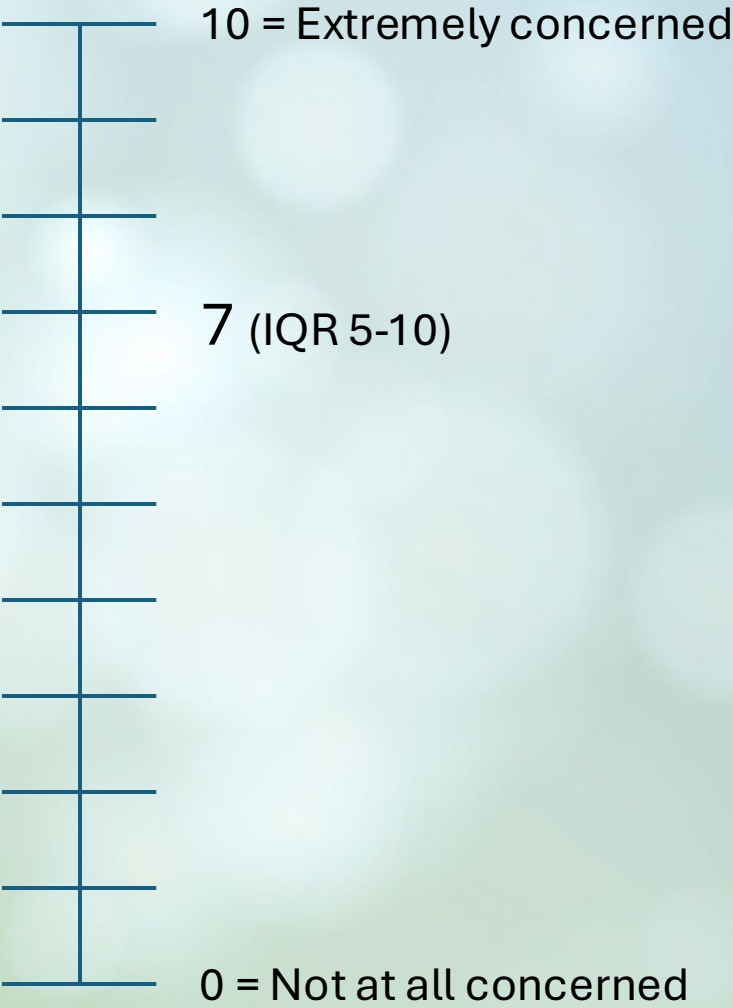


Level of Concern re: Onward Transmission

Survey Question:

*...how worried were you about the possibility of transmitting HIV to your sexual partners **during the period prior to learning about U=U?***

Prior to learning about U=U



Results

Among participants WITH prior U=U awareness

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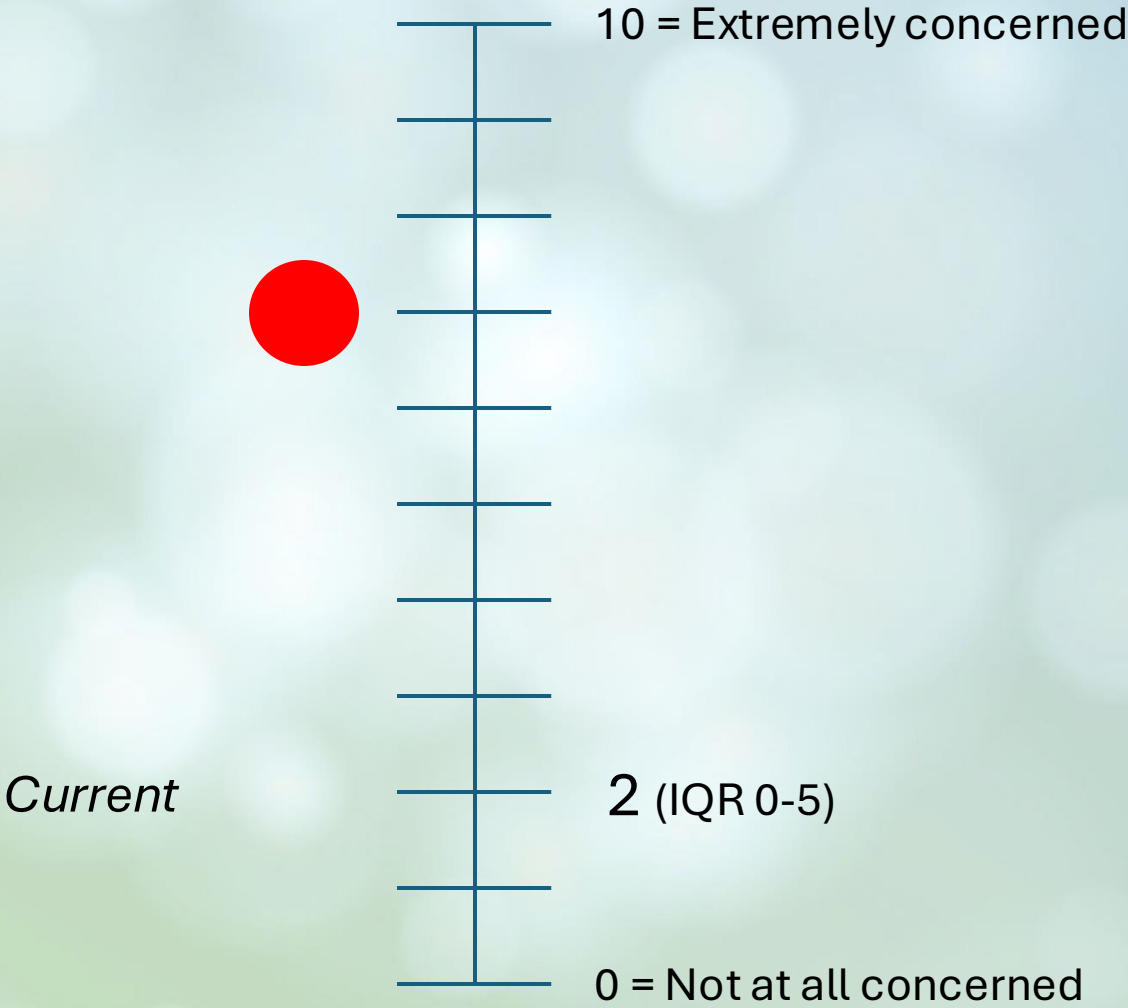


U=U Awareness

Level of Concern re: Onward Transmission

Survey Question:

*...how worried are you **currently** about the possibility of transmitting HIV to your sexual partners?*



Results

U=U Awareness

Among participants WITHOUT prior U=U awareness

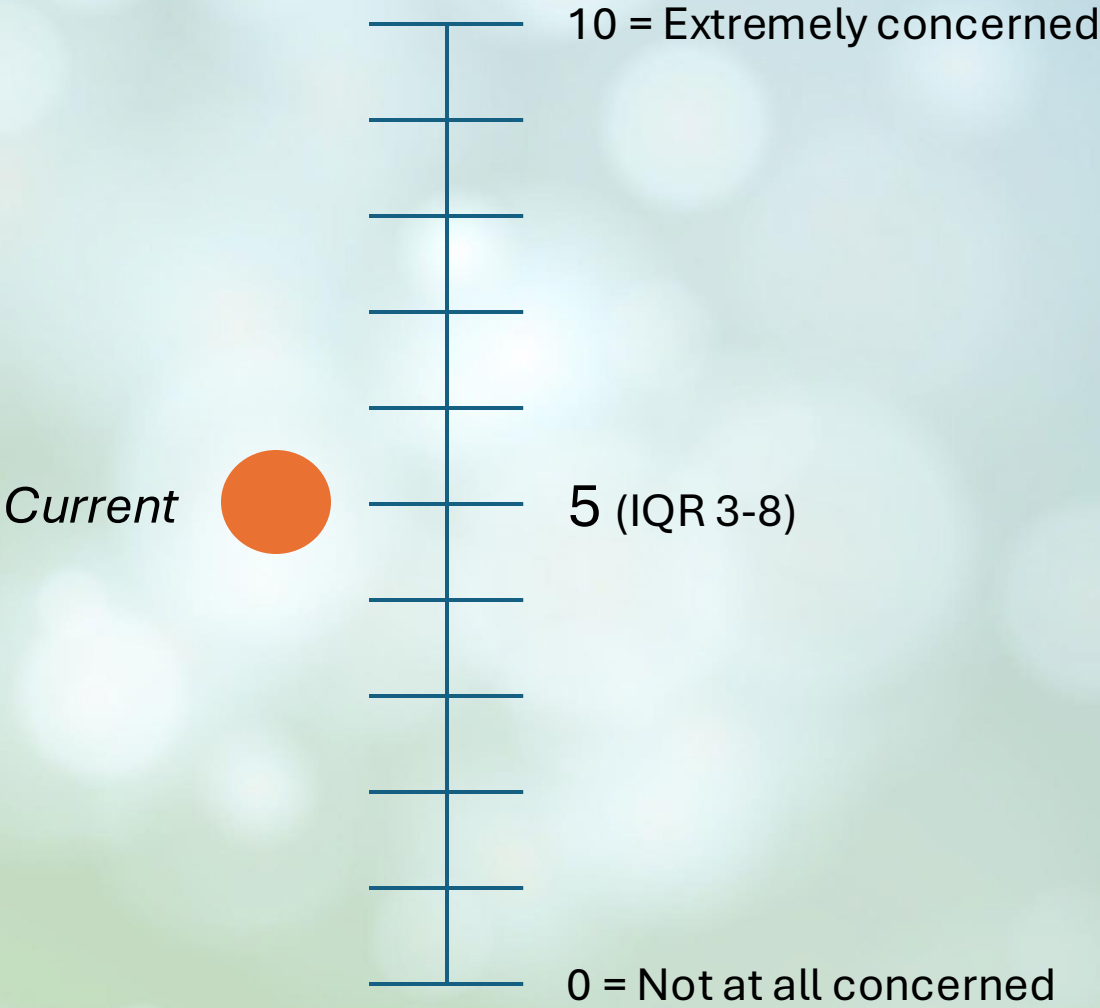
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Level of Concern re: Onward Transmission

Survey Question:

*...how worried are you **currently** about the possibility of transmitting HIV to your sexual partners?*



Results

U=U Awareness

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Associated with...



Higher Education

28.2% (75) vs 11.4% (5)

p<0.05



Income

68.8% (183) vs 36.4% (16)

p<0.001



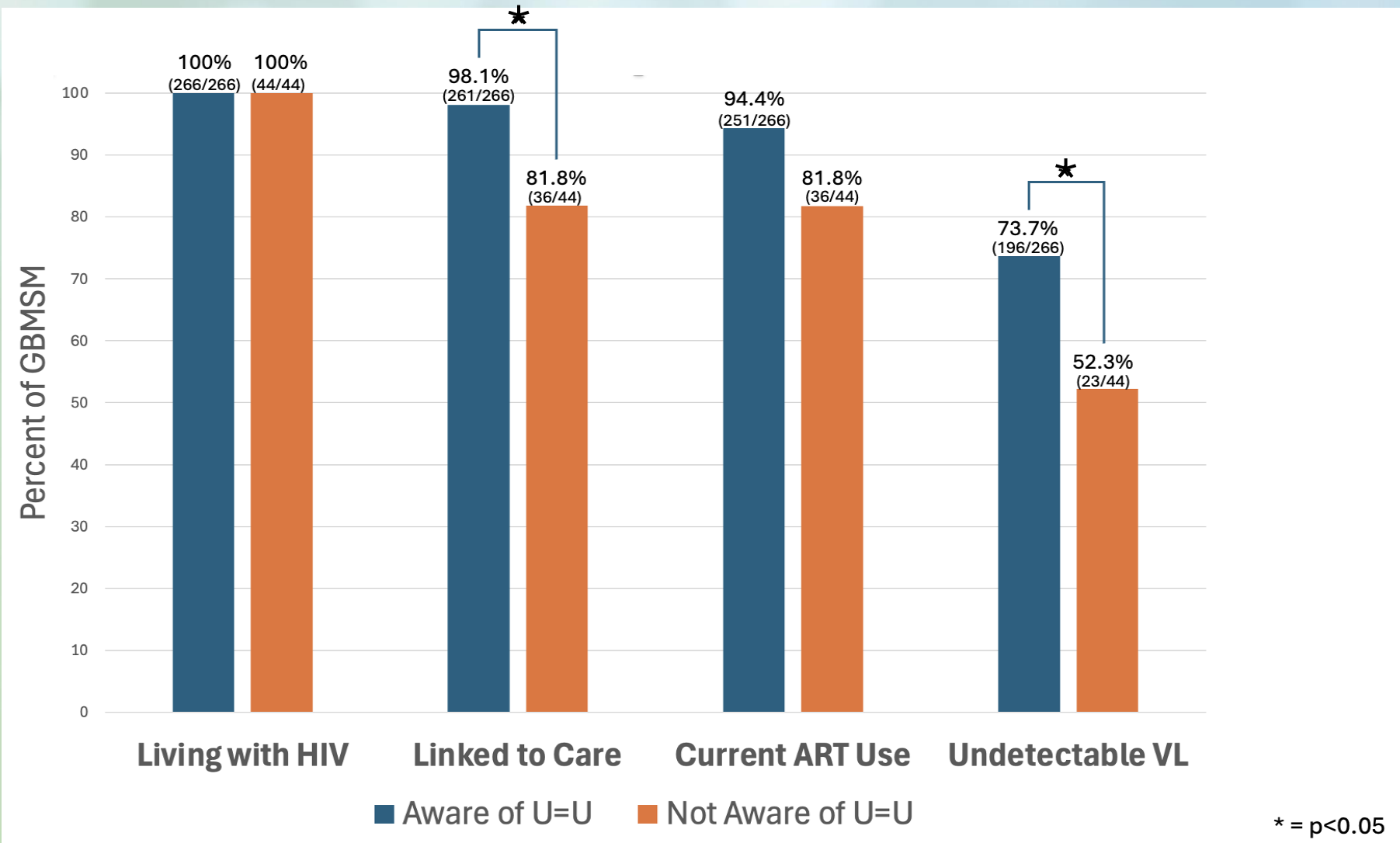
Cisgender

94.36% (251) vs 84.1% (37)

p<0.05

Results

Care Continuum



Results

Sexual Behavior

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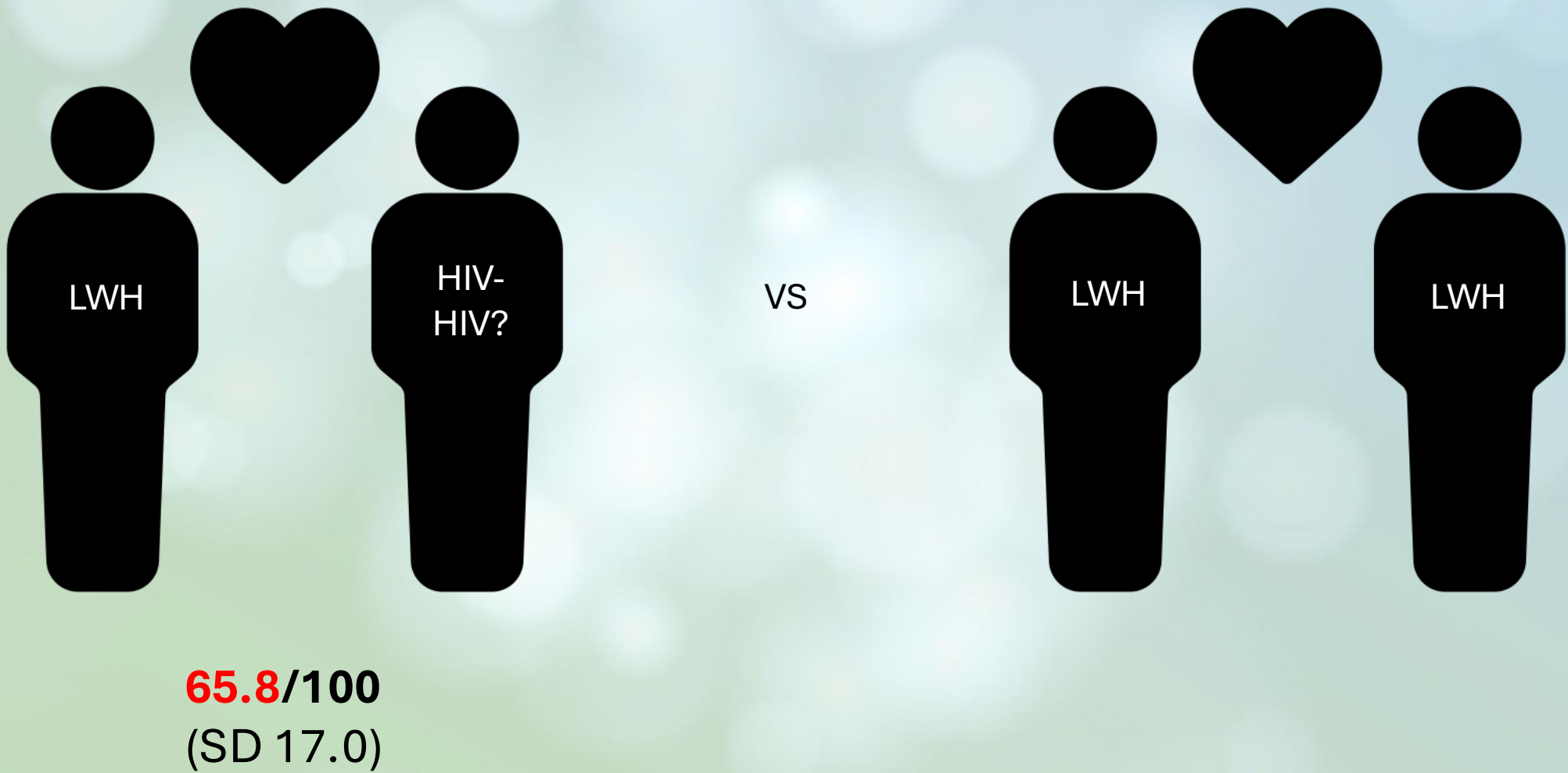
None of the key sexual behaviors examined were associated with U=U awareness or increased pleasure

Except...

Results

Sexual Satisfaction & Partner Seroconcordance

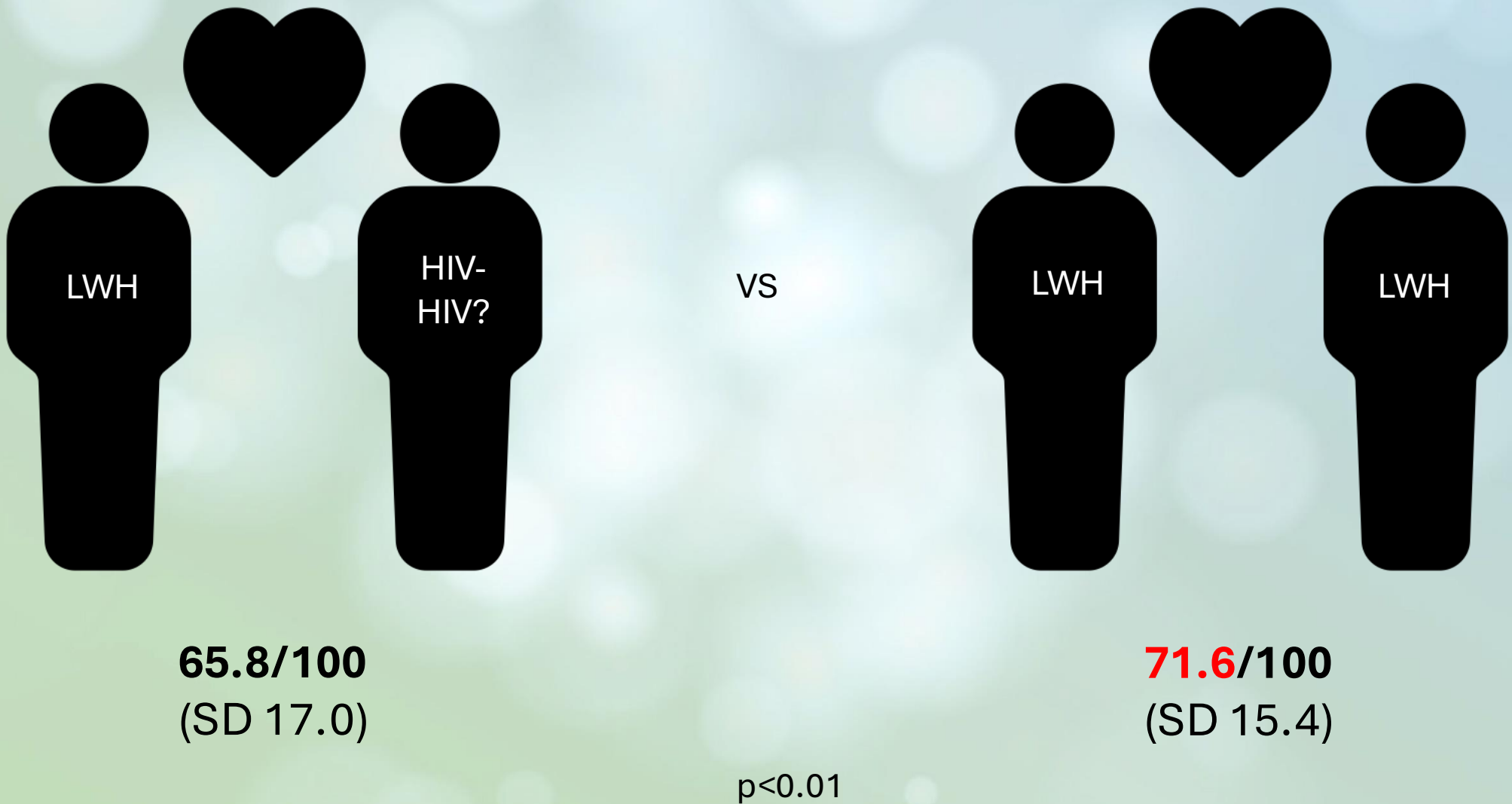
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Results

Sexual Satisfaction & Partner Seroconcordance

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Results

Sexual Satisfaction

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No Prior U=U Awareness



61.3/100
(SD 20.3)

VS

Prior U=U Awareness



Results

Sexual Satisfaction

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No Prior U=U Awareness



61.3/100
(SD 20.3)

VS

Prior U=U Awareness



68.1/100
(SD 16.1)

$p < 0.05$

Results

Sexual Satisfaction

Among participants **WITH** prior U=U awareness

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27.1%
enjoy sex **more**

Results

Among participants WITH prior U=U awareness

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Sexual Satisfaction



27.1%
enjoy sex **more**

23.3%
enjoy sex **less**

Results

Among participants WITHOUT prior U=U awareness

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Sexual Satisfaction



18.2%
enjoy sex **more**

Results

Among participants WITHOUT prior U=U awareness

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Sexual Satisfaction



18.2%
enjoy sex **more**

45.5%
enjoy sex **less**

Results

Sexual Satisfaction

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Why?



22.7% (10/44) of those WITHOUT prior U=U awareness

endorsed feelings of embarrassment/shame related to their HIV diagnosis

Results

Sexual Satisfaction

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Why?



22.7% (10/44) of those WITHOUT prior U=U awareness **vs**
7.1% (19/310) of those with prior awareness ($p = 0.001$)
endorsed feelings of embarrassment/shame related to their HIV diagnosis

Conclusions



Demographic differences in U=U awareness

U=U awareness is associated with improved linkage to HIV care and viral suppression

U=U awareness is not associated with increased likelihood of particular sexual behaviors

U=U awareness is associated with increased sexual satisfaction

Limitations

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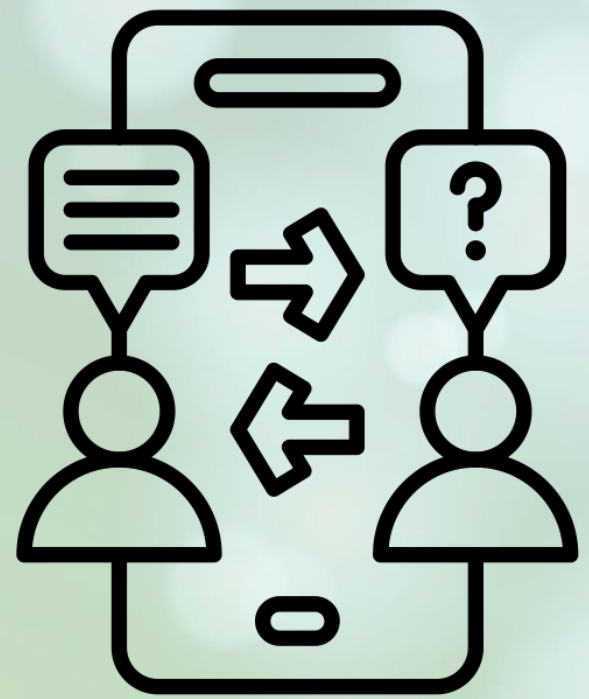
Self-reported outcomes (e.g. viral load)

Social acceptability bias

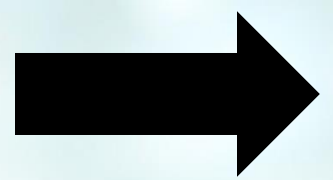
Selection bias

Next Steps

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30 phone interviews
(Nested Sample)



Qualitative
Analysis

Acknowledgements

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Co-Authors:

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- Hugo Sánchez
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Epicentro

NPGH

The Noun Project

Participants



Global Health Fellows

NORTHERN PACIFIC GLOBAL HEALTH RESEARCH
FELLOWS TRAINING CONSORTIUM



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Additional Slides

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Results

U=U Awareness

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Level of Accuracy re: U=U

Table. U=U Knowledge and Concern

	Total (N=310)	Prior Awareness of U=U (N=266)	No Prior Awareness (N=44)
Perceived Probability of HIV Transmission with Undetectable VL ***			
0%	48.7% (151/310)	53.0% (141/266)	22.7% (10/44)
≤1%	29.0% (90/310)	29.7% (79/266)	25.0% (11/44)
≤10%	10.6% (33/310)	9.8% (26/266)	15.9% (7/44)
=50%	6.1% (19/310)	3.8% (10/266)	20.5% (9/44)
>50%	5.5% (17/310)	3.8% (10/266)	15.9% (7/44)

p<0.001