



## 2025 SUMMIT

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New Orleans

Cutting Out Stigma: Early Evidence of Feasibility, Acceptability, and Impact from a Barbershop-Based Stigma Reduction and Health Promotion Intervention in the Southern US

Jessica Perkins, MS, PhD

Assistant Professor, Department of Human & Organizational Development at Vanderbilt University

Aima Ahonkhai, MD, MPH

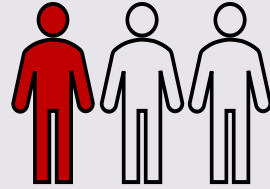
Associate Physician in Medicine  
Massachusetts General Hospital



# HIV Nationally and in Tennessee

## National

- Black Americans face the most severe burden of disease
  - 13% of US population
  - >40% new HIV infections
  - Lifetime HIV risk among Black MSM 1 in 3
  - Lifetime HIV risk among Black men 1 in 21
- Status quo approach may worsen racial inequities



## Tennessee

- 20,200 people living with HIV
- Memphis (Shelby County) 2<sup>nd</sup> highest incidence in country
- Inequities by race mirror national picture
- Young Black men least likely to engage in care



# Why Stigma?

“... It’s kind of just **like a plague** they don’t want to get near.”

*"Kinda like you're an abomination"*

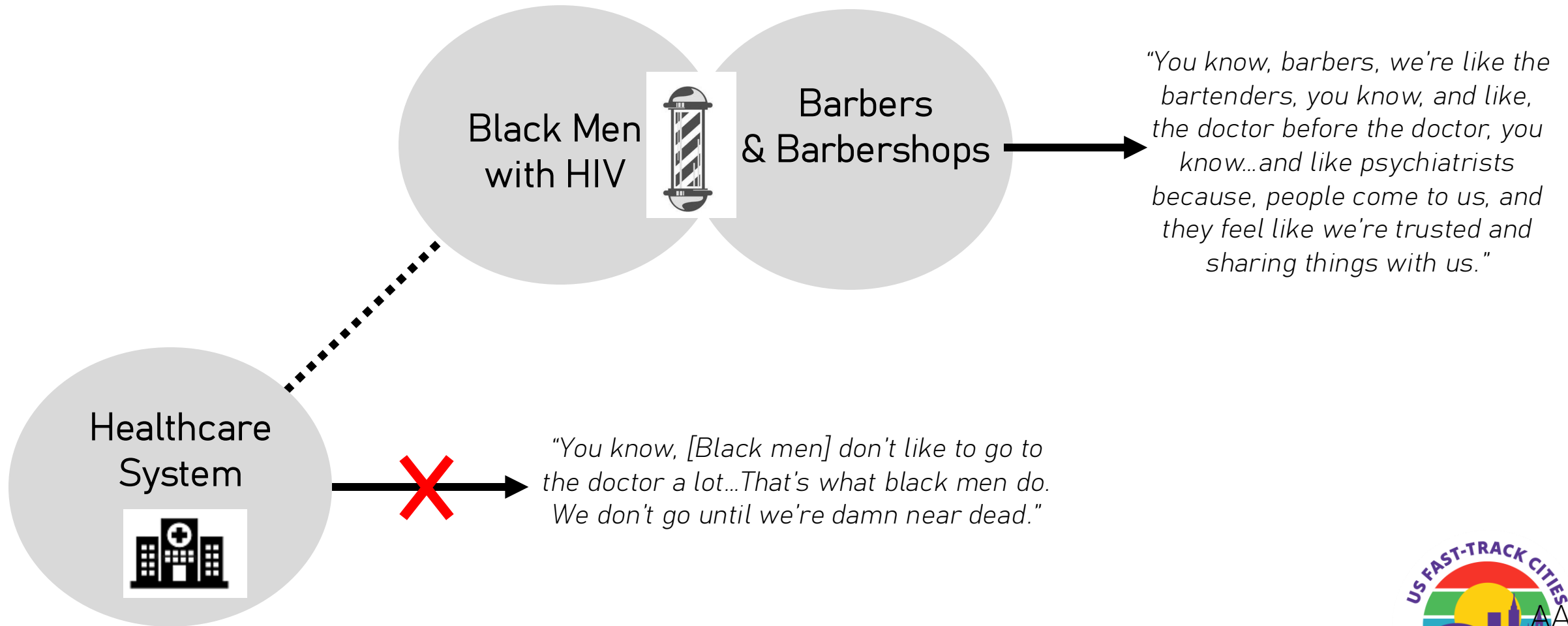
*"... If I get (HIV) and it's positive, I'm out of here. Like suicidal ideation type thing."*

*"I'd rather get shot than say I got AIDS."*

*"I feel as though it would need to be .....repainted ... to come up with a different name for something instead of AIDS... .. You have to rename it. I don't know. I don't want to hear AIDS."*



# Why Barbers? → Meeting Men Where They Are

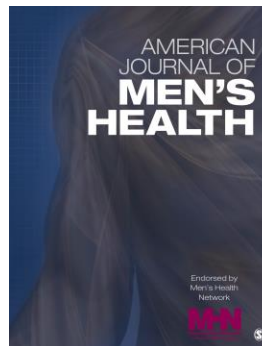


# Shared Leadership Model

- Community partners included on study team (co-PIs & Barberinvestigators)
- Acknowledgement of mutual contribution, benefit, & voice
- Community partners compensated as content experts
- Barbers trained as Mens Health Ambassadors



Nate King & Steve Nelson  
Barber Investigators presenting  
at National HIV Meetings



*HIV/AIDS/STIs - Original Article*



**Establishing an Academic–Community Partnership to Explore the Potential of Barbers and Barbershops in the Southern United States to Address Racial Disparities in HIV Care Outcomes for Black Men Living With HIV**

Chidiogo Nwakoby<sup>1</sup>, Leslie J. Pierce<sup>2</sup>, Robert Crawford<sup>3</sup>, Donaldson Conserve<sup>4</sup>, Jessica Perkins<sup>1</sup>, Sharon Hurt<sup>3</sup>, and Aima A. Ahonkhai<sup>1,2,5</sup>

# Study Aims and Study Schema

## Study Objective

To assess the implementation and preliminary effectiveness of barbershop-based stigma reduction and multimedia intervention.

## Intervention Schematic

6-month Pilot Implementation Trial

Data Collection includes quantitative and qualitative data collected at baseline, study end, and continues to be on going



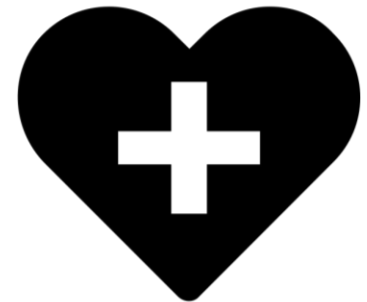
Barbershop  
Conversations

With referral to  
community resources



Multimedia Campaign

Weekly social media posts  
Billboards



Improve Men's Sexual  
Health

Reduce Community  
HIV Stigma

Ongoing weekly or monthly coaching to enhance training



# Intensive Men's Health Ambassador Training

## TRAINING CURRICULUM

### Men's Sexual Health

Understanding the HIV Care Continuum

How Stigma Causes Sickness

HIV and the Church

Preventing HIV with PrEP

Living with HIV today

### Mental Health

Role and Impact of Community Health Workers

Communication Strategies

Community Resources for Health

67 Barbers trained as health ambassadors



# Multimedia Campaign

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

09/20/2024 (FRIDAY) | 5PM - 6PM



### CAPTION

Choppin' it up in the barbershop is good for both the mind and soul. 🧊 It's important that we foster healthy relationships with black men, and look out for each other's wellbeing. Lets keep these convos going, and continue to "Cut the Stigma."

### HASHTAGS

#CuttingOutStigma  
#HIVAwareness #HIVPrevention  
#Nashville  
#NashvilleBarbers  
#NashvilleBarbershop  
#EndHIVStigma  
#BlackMenMatter  
#CommunityHealth



DOWNLOAD THIS GRAPHIC  
HERE



Social Media Posts



MOJO Marketing



Barbershop & Barbers

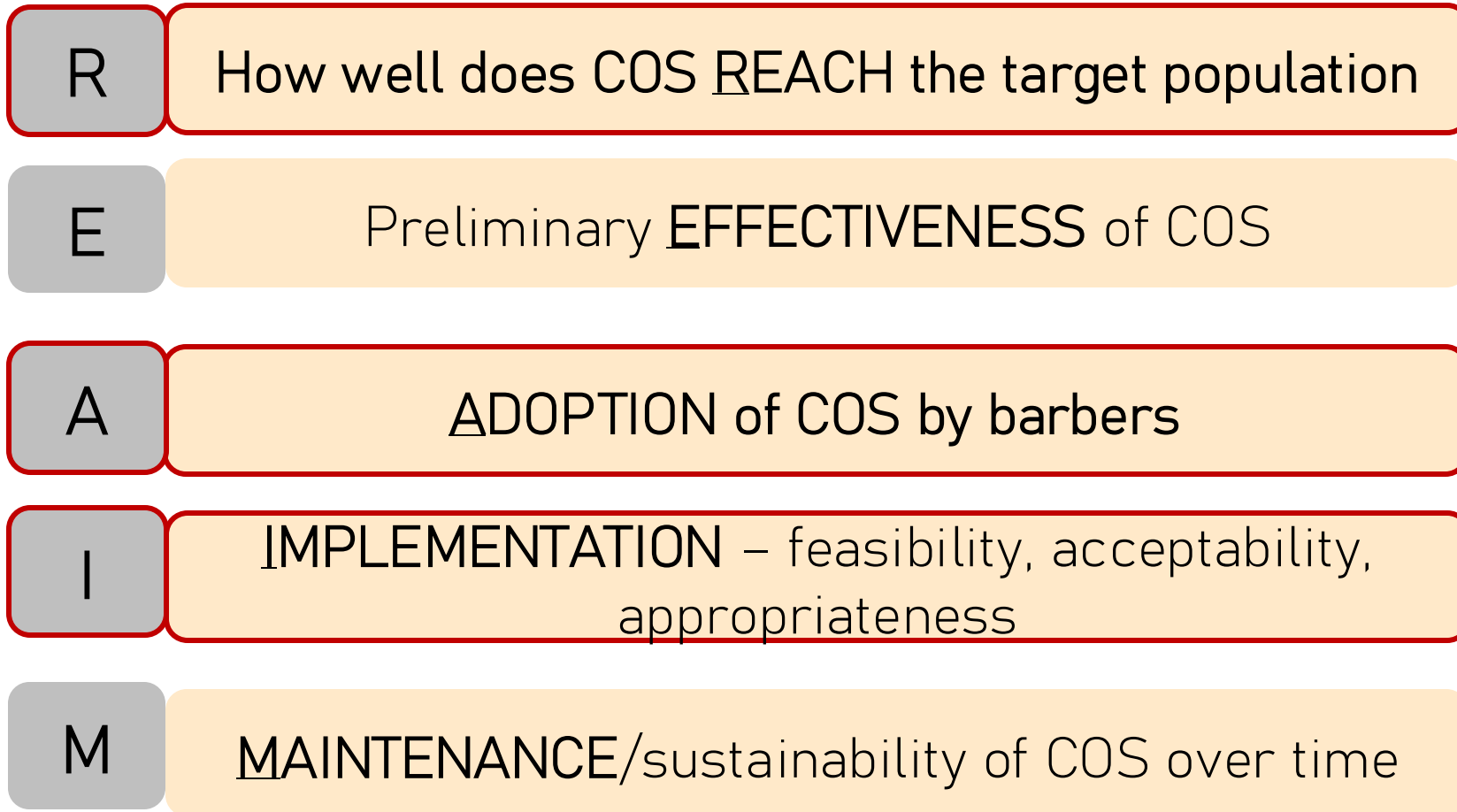


Billboards





# Framework for Measuring Impact of COS



52

Enrolled in  
implementation trial





# COS Reached 4,400 Barbershop Client Encounters

59% of barbers spoke to 6 or more clients/week about health & sexual health topics



# COS Reached 25,000 people/month via Social Media

	Facebook 			Instagram 			Combined
	Followers	Reach	Impressions	Followers	Reach	Impressions	IG & FB Reach
Cutting Out Stigma	113	1,357	2,868	141	1637	1813	2,994
COS Barbers	1,025	12,309*	26,099*	1,063	12,341*	13,598*	24,650*

**Reach** = number of unique people who have seen content

**Impressions** = number times the content is displayed on a platform regardless of whether it was clicked on or not. Impressions include unique and repeated views of your content by the same user.

\*estimated



# COS Is Feasible and Acceptable to Barbers

Measure	Scale	Baseline (n=67)	Study End (n=31)
Enthusiasm	0-100	92	93
Readiness	1-5	4.6	4.8
Feasibility	1-5	4.9	4.9
Acceptability	1-5	4.7	5.0
Appropriateness	1-5	4.7	4.9

All implementation outcomes were high after training, and remained high (or increased) after the 6-month pilot





# Measuring Impact

## FGDs with 10 barbers

- Barbers enjoyed serving as community leaders through COS
- Clients were receptive to receiving information and to hearing about referrals
- Condom distribution was successful and helped identify clients (especially youth) who needed more information or resources
- Barbers are enthusiastic about continuing and expanding the program

*"Cutting Out Stigma kinda made me a pillar in my community."*

*"I felt like I was doing something positive for the people."*

*"I created relationships with other barbers in the city that I hadn't met yet."*

*"It was refreshing to be able to use my business to help further something."*



# Acknowledgements

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Victor Tian  
Konor von Kraut

## COS Barbers

## Middle TN Barber Cohort

Steve Nelson  
Nate King

## SCHD

Denford Galloway

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Donaldson Conserve

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Maddie Humphrey  
Caitrin Spottiswoode  
Grace Keele  
Shantaal Lovera  
Jada McMeo  
Magda Agwa

## Headliners Connect 2 Potect

Mojo Marketing and PR  
SE AIDS Education and  
Training Center  
Rutgers  
Shawnika Hull

Help us Cut Out Stigma!

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[aahonkhai@mgh.harvard.edu](mailto:aahonkhai@mgh.harvard.edu)  
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