The Undetectables Project!

International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC)
Controlling the HIV Epidemic with Antiretrovirals: Avoiding the Cost of Inaction

18-19 September 2014 – Royal Garden Hotel, London
Ginny Shubert • Housing Works, Inc.
www.housingworks.org
WHO ARE THE UNDETECTABLES?

FIND OUT SPRING 2014
Who’s participating?

- Housing Works is a NYC community-based organization providing integrated care for homeless and formerly homeless people with HIV/AIDS
  - Primary health care
  - Behavioral health services
  - Housing and assistance with other basic subsistence needs
  - Case management and care coordination

- Approximately 1,500 active HIV+ clients
  - 84% black or Hispanic
  - 33% identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans or gender non-conforming
  - > 50% histories of incarceration
  - > 50% co-infection with HepC
  - 100% living at or below poverty line
  - 90% extended histories of mental illness and/or chemical dependence
What is the Undetectables Project?

- 24-month grant funded pilot with a goal of assisting at least 80% of HIV+ participants to achieve and maintain undetectable viral load (≤50 copies/ml)
- Projected enrollment: 500 at 12 months & 700 at 24 months
- Uses a community support model
- Launched in March 2014
- A core component of Housing Works’ commitment to a New York State plan to end AIDS by 2020
What’s in the toolkit?

Stepped approach to ARV adherence

✓ Individual-level ARV adherence planning and support
  – case conferences among client, health providers & case manager
  – motivational interviewing & assistance to meet subsistence needs
  – Behavioral health assessment/referral

✓ $100 gift card incentive for quarterly lab result showing undetectable viral load (≤50 copies/ml), up to 4 per year

✓ Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) adherence support groups

✓ Adherence devices such as pill-boxing and text or other daily medication reminders

✓ Directly observed ARV therapy (DOT)
Evaluation design

- Community based participatory approach in collaboration with academic partners at the University of Pennsylvania
- Study examining efficiency, feasibility & cost-effectiveness
- Using each participant as his/her control, assess viral load and cumulative viral exposure pre and post enrollment
- Qualitative interviews with participants and staff to examine attitudes regarding program efficacy
- Standard methods of cost analysis to evaluate cost-utility as a function of incremental program costs and medical costs saved through averted downstream infections
First look at 6 months: viral loads

- **Pre-enrollment**: among 441 clients eligible for enrollment at project launch:
  - 54% virally suppressed using ≤50 copies/mil as the measure
  - 37% detectable
  - 9% unknown (refused testing or inconclusive result)

- **Baseline for 511 clients enrolled through September 11, 2014**:
  - 62% virally suppressed using ≤50 copies/mil as the measure
  - 25% detectable
  - 13% unknown (refused testing or inconclusive result)

- **Current for 490 clients enrolled at September 11, 2014**:
  - 77.35% virally suppressed using ≤50 copies/mil as the measure
  - 19.39% detectable
  - 3.27% unknown (refused testing or inconclusive result)
First look at 6 months: viral exposure

VLs for least 2 time points prior to and following enrollment
Analysis includes 75% of enrolled clients (n=363)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>At and before baseline</th>
<th>Post enrollment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion suppressed at all timepoints</td>
<td>28.4 (n=103)</td>
<td>52.1*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proportion detectable at all timepoints</td>
<td>15.7 (n=57)</td>
<td>22.9**</td>
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<td>Mean proportion of suppressed timepoints</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.67***</td>
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*Chi sq p < .0001

**chi sq p < .05

***p < .01
Why become an **Undetectable**?

- Becoming an **Undetectable** is becoming a Hero!
- Becoming an **Undetectable** improves your health, well being, and your life expectancy!
- Becoming an **Undetectable** can reduce the likelihood of transmitting HIV to sexual partners!
- Becoming an **Undetectable** helps to end the HIV epidemic!
Acknowledgements

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