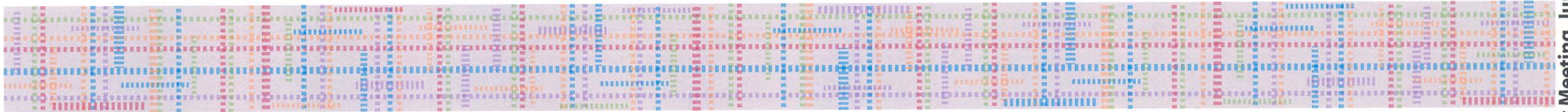


A THEORETICAL-BASED INTERVENTION TO CHANGE HIV RISK BEHAVIORS IN PUERTO RICO

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INTRODUCTION

Puerto Rico is a small island (approximately 100 by 35 miles) in the Caribbean with a population of 3.88 million inhabitants. Puerto Rico is part of the United States since the Spanish-American War in 1898. The island shares with the US many elements of its social structure and culture, including social and health problems such as HIV/AIDS.

Puerto Rico continues to be a major AIDS epicenter, following Washington, D.C., New York, the US Virgin Islands, Florida and Maryland. Drug injection has been the main risk category in Puerto Rico since AIDS was declared a major epidemic. Different from other sites in the US mainland, where drug users have reduced HIV risk behaviors significantly, in our studies in Puerto Rico we continue to detect high rates of HIV risk behaviors among drug users. This study is in search of testing the effectiveness of an intervention trial designed to change HIV risk behaviors, reduce drug use, increase the use of drug treatment and enhance health status in Puerto Rico.

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

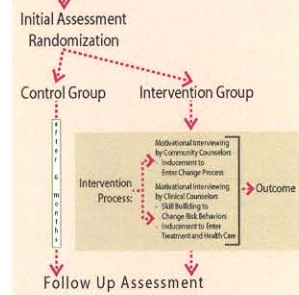
STAGES OF CHANGE

Stage	Description
Pre-Contemplation	No intention to change the behavior in the near future.
Contemplation	In this stage the patient is aware of the need to change the behavior and is seriously thinking about making the change in a foreseeable future.
Preparation	In this stage the patient intends to take action in the near future (next week or 30 days) and has taken small steps towards modifying the behavior.
Action	A patient in this stage has recently changed a behavior, but is still in the process of changing and must work to acquire the skills to help prevent high risk situations that might provoke relapses.
Maintenance	In this stage the patient has sustained the behavior for a period of at least 6 months, but is still at some risk of relapse.

METHODS

RECRUITMENT

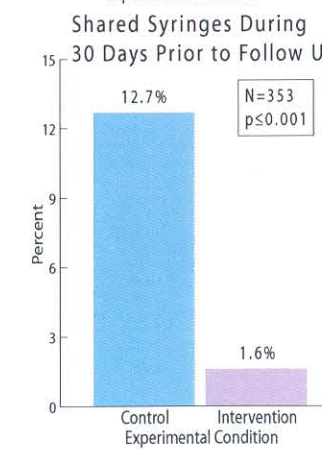
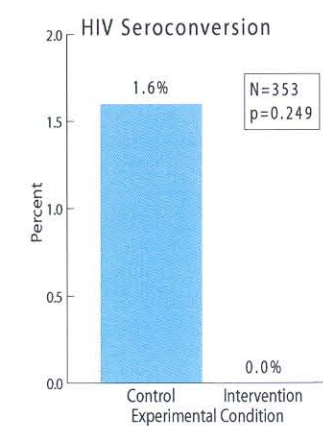
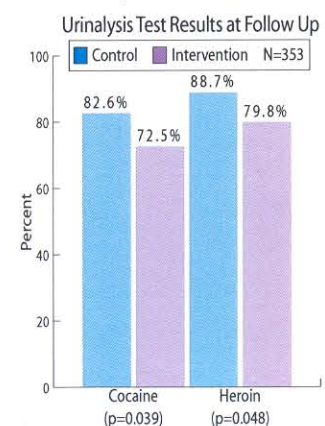
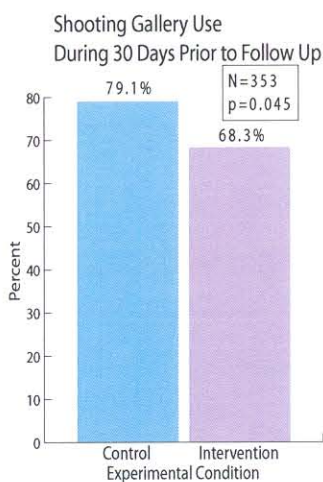
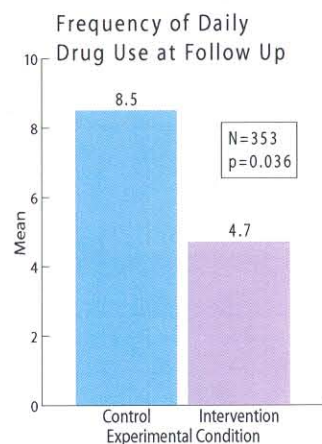
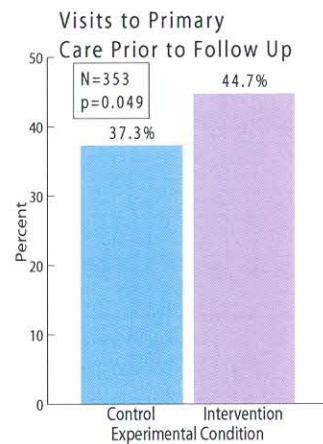
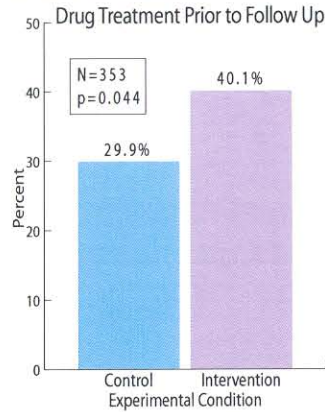
(Targeted Sampling in Communities of the North Health Care Region)



INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Strategy	Delivered By
- Role inducement in the community to enter and continue in the intervention;	Community Counselors
- Role inducement in the project's center to enter health care services;	Clinical Counselors
- Visits to primary care physicians and other activities related to health status (e.g., immunology clinics, laboratories);	Clinical Counselors
- Counseling to continue inducement to enter and complete drug treatment;	Community & Clinical Counselors
- Counseling for HIV risk behaviors, including demonstration and practice;	Clinical Counselors
- Continuous outreach contacts in the community or in treatment and booster sessions.	Community & Clinical Counselors

RESULTS



CONCLUSIONS

- The experimental intervention seems to be effective in increasing use of health services and reducing drug use frequency.
- Although not statistically significant, participants of the experimental intervention were less likely to report HIV risk behaviors.
- Motivational Interviewing, guided by the Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change, seems to be effective in helping drug users reduce risk behaviors and drug use.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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