Over 20% of HIV-infected people are unaware of their serostatus.

Partner services (PS) notifies sexual and needle-sharing partners of exposure to disease.

Rate of newly diagnosed HIV infections among tested partners ranges from 10-30%.

Referral rates for PS are suboptimal.

Why are referral rates of PS suboptimal?

What are the perspectives and experiences with PS among:
- Men who have Sex with Men (MSM);
- Medical Case Managers (MCM);
- Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS)?

Barriers to PS are multi-factorial:
- Trusting relationships across disciplines and with clients are fundamental but challenged by stigma associated with HIV and sexual orientation;
- Competing agendas of a vulnerable population (housing, food) deprioritize PS;
- Inadequate knowledge of PS and referral process among MSM, MCM and other health care providers.

IDEAL PS PROCESS

Men who Have Sex with Men
In-Depth Interview
n=18

Medical Case Managers
Focus Group
n=14

Disease Intervention Specialists
In-Depth Interview
n=7

Stigma and Fears of Rejection
“It’s easier for me to talk about my drugs and drinking than to talk about being gay. I can talk about drinking and drugging all day.”

Managing Personal Judgment
“What works best for me is to remind myself that my common sense is different from someone else’s... I have to kind of try to hold back judgment...that’s the really hard part.”

Direct Personal Communication
“If you talk down to them, of course, you’re not going to get anywhere. If you talk above them, you’re not going to get anywhere either.”

PROMOTE DISCLOSURE AND PS
- PS Awareness Campaign targeting MSM, MCM and health care providers;
- Support efforts to destigmatize HIV and homosexuality.

FOSTER MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM APPROACH
- Integrate DIS into clinical services;
- Trainings on cultural competency, including interview skills for MSM.