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HIV CARE CONNECT

Reducing Disparities in HIV Care

Principal Investigator's Welcome



Gratitude. In this month of Thanksgiving, I pause to express gratitude to so many who have given so much to HIV Care Connect. In recent weeks, I am grateful for the warm welcome and hospitality during our site visits to Montgomery, Miami, and Jackson – many thanks to each site team and their evaluation partners. From the NPO team, I have deep appreciation for Greer and Kaylee, who represented UAB on all 3 site visits and kept the rest of the team apprised of the visits...and cuisine. I also want to thank Larry Heard, who recently joined the team and helped reset the cross-site evaluation that will guide the NPO in working collaborative with project teams for the next 2 years. I am grateful that Alyssa is back from maternity leave – and so thankful to meet her beautiful baby on Zoom. While I cannot recognize each and every one of the incredible team members across all sites, I want to pause and express gratitude for Jennifer Thompson at MAO. As the agency experienced significant organizational challenges and is now transitioning under new management, her commitment to her clients and the HIV Care Connect Program remind me of why I was attracted to HIV as a medical student. People like Jennifer inspire me day in and day out with their deep commitment to those they serve. Lastly, immense gratitude for the clients – the people – we are able to engage and connect with via our roles in HIV Care Connect. Such

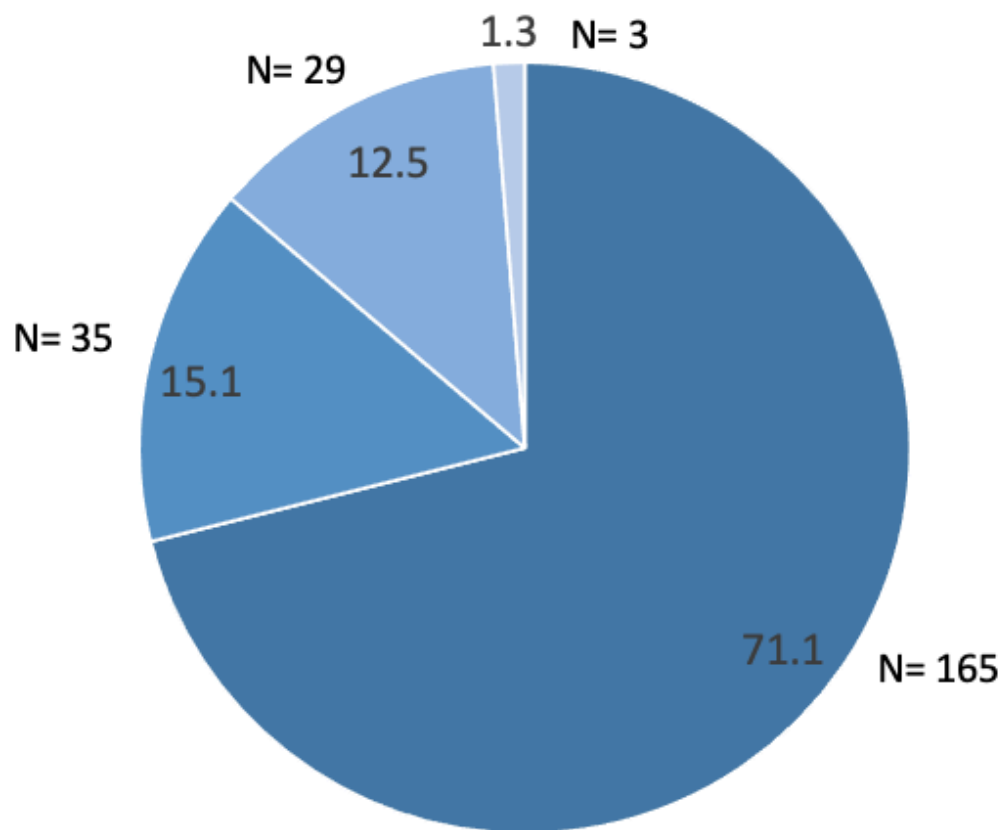
Onward!

Michael Mugavero, MD, MHSc

NEWS

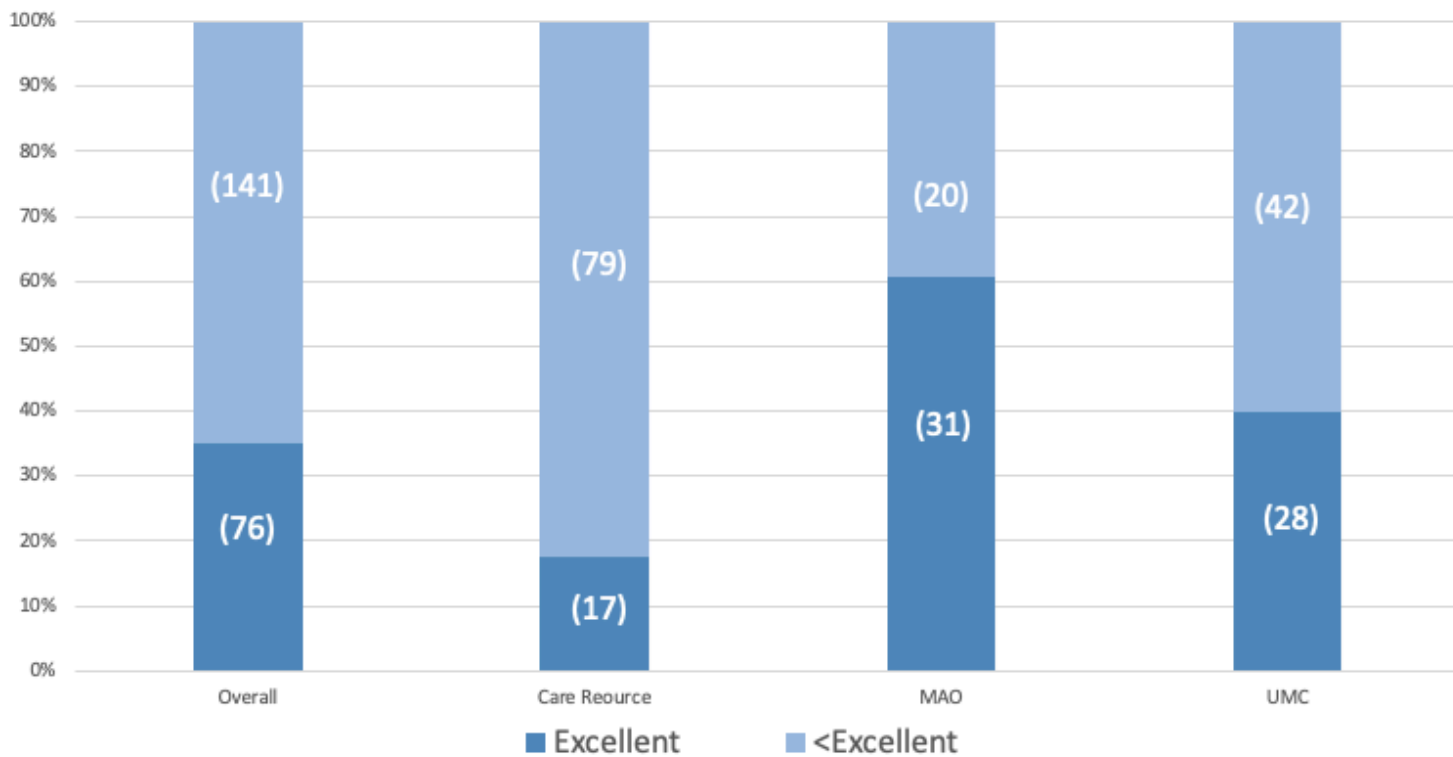
Preliminary Results are In!

As the National Program Office for [HIV Care Connect](#) (HCC), the University of Alabama at Birmingham's Research and Informatics Service Center (RISC) is responsible for conducting ongoing evaluations for the funding organization, the Merck Foundation, in order to measure the effectiveness HCC interventions across all three sites. As part of these efforts, we collect clinical data on a quarterly basis from the sites. The first data upload was completed in March 2022 and we are planning to receive the next data upload in early 2023. We collect patient reported outcomes data on a rolling basis via REDCap, so the data in the charts below represents the data available via REDCap up to 10/26/22 since the start of the project. As a note, ART Adherence is self-reported data based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from extremely poor to excellent.



■ African American ■ White ■ Other ■ Missing

ART Adherence Years 1-3



Care Resource's Project DARE Selected to Participate in OIDP Case Study

Benefits of Community Engagement

Key benefit-cost findings on social determinants of health and HIV primary care for Project DARE in Miami, FL.

PROJECT DARE

Care Resource Community Health Centers, Inc. is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) with four locations in Miami, Florida. Care Resource provides holistic wraparound clinical and supportive services for people living with HIV (PLWH) through Project DARE (Disparities in care Addressed through Access, Retention, and Equity).

KEY FINDINGS



RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

\$7.62 for each \$1 spent

For every \$1 Care Resource spends on clinical and supportive services, \$7.62 worth of services is delivered to PLWH and the community.



HOUSING

\$17.38
for each \$1 spent

Care Resource works with local organizations to help PLWH find temporary and subsidized housing with Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) or Section 8 vouchers. Each \$1 spent provides \$17.38 worth of savings to PLWH and the community.



FOOD SECURITY

\$11.02
for each \$1 spent

Care Resource helps PLWH achieve food security by providing food packages, gift cards for grocery stores, and connections to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). For each \$1 spent, \$11 worth of benefits is provided to PLWH and the community.



TRANSPORTATION

\$0.50
for each \$1 spent

Care Resource helps PLWH attend medical and supportive appointments through transportation assistance in the form of payments for ridesharing. This activity provides \$0.50 worth of savings for each \$1 spent.

Earlier this year, Care Resource's HCC Initiative, Project DARE, was one of three programs selected by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Infectious Diseases and HIV/AIDS Policy (OIDP) to participate in a cost-benefits case study. The primary aim of this study was to better understand the cost and benefits of health interventions that address the social determinants of health (SDOH) that impact people living with HIV (PLWH) and the wrap-around services they provide to assist PLWH in achieving viral suppression. The data collection activities for this case study included: (1) extensive document review; (2) interviews with project staff; and (3) interviews and surveys with Project DARE clients.

Finalized in October 2022, the case study revealed that clients feel they receive immediate, individualized support from Project DARE staff that have ultimately helped them improve their mental health, access to HIV care, and medication adherence. Clients also report feelings of trust

and comfort with project staff, as well as appreciation for staff listening to their concerns and developing individualized care plans. The case study also revealed a significant return on investment: for each dollar spent on clinical and supportive services for PLWH, \$7.62 worth of services is delivered to PLWH and the community!

Overall, findings show that addressing SDOH can help clients achieve and sustain better health outcomes. To read the full brief, please visit the Resources tab on the [HIV Care Connect website!](#)

Events & Announcements

- Mark your calendars, HCC Staff! UMMC is hosting their next webinar on the Landscape of HIV in Mississippi at 1:00 pm CST Friday, 12/02/22. Reach out to Greer at gmccollum@uabmc.edu if you have not received the calendar invite.
- UAB has developed an updated Cross-site Evaluation Plan to focus on program sustainability, outcomes, and dissemination in the last two years of the project. Read it [here](#).
- The Virtual Community of Practice has an updated conference calendar for 2023. See what HIV conferences are coming up [here](#).
- The Virtual Community of Practice has also been updated with important dates for Year 4. Click [here](#) to see data upload schedule, webinar dates, and more!

- Project DARE at Care Resource was selected by the federal Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy to participate in a case study of HIV interventions focused on the Social Determinants of Health. Read the case study [here](#)!
- iEngage has been added to the CDC's Prevention Research Synthesis compendium of evidenced based practices. See the entry [here](#). Congrats to Dr. Mugavero and the rest of the iEngage development team!
- Congrats to UAB's own Alyssa Carodine on recently bringing a beautiful baby girl into this world. We're so happy for you and your family!

Staff Spotlight

Q1: How did you get your start working in public health?

I started my career as a Florida Epidemic Intelligence Service (FL-EIS) Fellow with the Florida Department of Health.

Q2: What is your position at UMMC and what sort of work do you do for HCC?

I am a Project Manager and I oversee activities for HCC and serve as data manager.

Q3: What is the most rewarding thing about your HCC intervention, ALL-IN at CIRCLE?

All-In at Circle helps to meet the needs of our most vulnerable clients.

Q4 What does your ideal Saturday consist of?

I usually start my Saturdays off with a run or walk and the remainder of the day is dedicated to my family.

Q5: What is one fun fact about Jackson that most people don't know?

Jackson is also called "The City with Soul" because of her perseverance and her triumphant spirit.



Kendra Johnson
Program and Data Manager
UMMC
Jackson, MS

Publications of Interests

- [PBS Documentary](#) about Ending the HIV Epidemic, which features our very own UAB 1917 Clinic!

written by a researcher in Miami.

- [Health Affairs Forefront post](#) on hospitals addressing the social determinants of health
- [Free Associations podcast episode](#) about self-testing HIV kits in Zambia-for the epidemiology nerd.
- [Thought-provoking article](#) from *The Conversation* about the politics of the term, "Men who have sex with men."
- [Open Access AIDS and Behavior systematic review](#) about HIV literacy, ART adherence, and retention in care
- Four publications for a better South: [Scalawag](#), [Oxford American](#), [Bitter Southerner](#), and [Facing South](#)

Staff Shoutout

The UAB RISC wants to thank **Brooke Penney** for all her hard work on HIV Care Connect! Brooke is the NPO's data wiz and REDCap pro. She is the mastermind behind data uploads, and there is no way the cross-site evaluation would be possible without her. Thanks, Brooke!

Client Stories

Any encouraging client stories you'd like to share (with the permission of clients, of course).

Have stories you want to share, news to proclaim, or a colleague to congratulate? Please press [HERE](#) to provide us with content to include in the next edition of the newsletter.



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