

# Examining Social Ecological and Network Factors to Assess Epidemiological Risk in a Large National Cohort of Cisgender Women (AWARE)

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# Study Team

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Research teams  
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Community  
Advisory Board

# Study Background & Objectives

- HIV incidence rates continue to decrease in the US
  - A critical need remains to strengthen and advance prevention science where declines appear to have stalled, particularly among cisgender women of color.
- Traditional demographic and behavioral risk factors are insufficient to identify women who are vulnerable to HIV infection.

## Objectives

- To develop a knowledgebase to identify theoretically driven correlates of HIV seroconversion, STI incidence, and predictors of PrEP uptake among cisgender women in the US.
- Findings will increase our understanding of women's vulnerabilities to HIV infection, enhance identification of PrEP eligibility, and inform interventions to decrease the incidence of HIV and STIs.

# Study Aims

- **Aim 1:** Identify optimal approaches to digitally recruit and retain women vulnerable to HIV infection in a longitudinal cohort study.
  - Aim 1a. Use a Delphi Method to develop and test a HIV Knowledge Questionnaire in the era of PrEP prevention
- **Aim 2.** Develop a knowledgebase comprised of cohort data from a national digital cohort (N=1,800) of HIV negative (confirmed through OraQuick) women augmented with other data sources to examine multi-level vulnerabilities to HIV infection.
- **Aim 3.** Determine, through multi-level analyses, HIV and STI acquisition (e.g., incidence) and PrEP use within the context of our social-ecological theoretical framework to better understand differences by individual, network, geospatial, and public policy factors.



# Study Sample

- Inclusion Criteria:
  - Be at least 17 years of age
  - Be female sex assigned at birth
  - Identify as female
  - Understand and read English or Spanish
  - Live within U.S. and its territories
  - Be HIV-negative
  - Self-report unprotected vaginal or anal sex with a male in the past 6 months
- Potential participants ALSO must meet 1 or more of the following in the past 6 months (except for incarceration, which could have occurred in the past 5 years) to be eligible:
  - Injection or non-injection drug use (heroin, cocaine, crack cocaine, methamphetamine, or prescription drugs apart from those prescribed by a licensed provider)
  - Self-reported history of sexually transmitted infections, such as gonorrhea, chlamydia, or syphilis
  - Exchange of sex for commodities, such as drugs, money, or shelter; or male sexual partner with reported history of either injection or non-injection drug use, sexually transmitted infections, HIV diagnosis
  - Incarceration of partner or self (jail or prison  $\geq$  24 hours within the past 5 years).

# Study progress



**Study start up** completed



**Aim 1** Qualitative interviews and Delphi survey in progress



**Aim 2** Procedures & biomarker collection set up