

## Learning Objectives

- Identify **key factors** to collaboration with faith leaders for health information dissemination
- Evaluate **opportunities to collaborate** with faith-based organizations for community health information interventions
- Formulate ways to **use health information technology**, in conjunction with faith leaders and faith-based organizations, to make health information **accessible** to marginalized patient populations

## Introduction

- African Americans are at the **highest risk of HIV** of any racial group; they comprise 45% of HIV diagnoses in the U.S. despite being 12% of the population.
- In 1996, the YOUR Center was founded in Flint to **respond to the HIV pandemic**. YOUR developed an HIV/STI Outreach, Prevention, and Education (H.O.P.E.) curriculum.
- In 2001, using H.O.P.E. as the foundation, the YOUR Center **collaborated with the National Coalition of Pastors' Spouses** to create an HIV Awareness and Prevention manual for African American faith communities.
- In 2006 this manual was transformed into Your Blessed Health (YBH), an HIV/STI education and prevention intervention
- YBH has trained over **200** faith leaders across **9** denominations in over **80 FBOs** across Michigan to disseminate the community-level impact of HIV.
- The YBH impact has been detailed in peer-reviewed articles and presentations; however, the **impact on the faith leaders themselves** has not been described.

## Methods

- In-depth **individual** interviews with African American faith leaders who participated in at least one STI/HIV (YBH) information session
- Reviewed interview **transcripts**, extracted quotes and developed preliminary themes based on interviews.
- **28** Interviews (4 “First Ladies”) completed as of 11.1.2019
- **Straussian grounded theory** - systematic approach for analyzing interview transcripts (current step).
- Results from the analysis of the interviews **inform** paper-based survey

## Results – Participants (N=28)

Gender	
Male	18
Female	10

Faith/Denomination		Age	
Non-Denominational Christian	12	30-39	1
		40-49	2
Baptist	8	50-59	2
		60-69	16
Pentecostal/COGIC	6	70-79	6
		80-89	1
Lutheran	1		
Muslim	1		

Years as Faith Leader			
0-9	10-19	20-29	30+
2	11	9	6

## Findings

### 1. Awareness

After **becoming aware** of magnitude of HIV pandemic (Genesee County), embraced role as conduits to sexual health information

### 2. Role as Church Leader

Included sexual health information in church (e.g., sermons, meetings) to **promote health** in their congregations and communities - part of role to pastor to the "whole man" or "whole person"

### 3. Situated in Church Teaching

Remained dedicated to **promoting abstinence** until marriage but were willing to discuss **modes of prevention** of STIs and unwanted pregnancies

Maintained view of **LGBTQ issues** (e.g., same-sex relationships) as anti-church teaching ("individual is in crisis"), but several neutral on the topic in a sexual health context

### 4. Continued to Seek Information

Some **continued** to seek sexual health information (e.g., online, health department, and hospitals) at YBH conclusion, while others did not

### 5. Recommended More Information

Recommended to continue to educate faith leaders about STI/HIV prevention and STI/HIV **prevalence statistics** specific to their **communities** with information distilled, so that it is shared easily with congregations

## Awareness

"YBH kinda opened up my mindset to venture out of ... just a one-track message of salvation." (P11)

"YBH was a catalyst for us to bring the physical dimension to our congregations, because we are operating in what we call 'traditional ignorance'" (P04)

"Personally, it impacted me with a hurt that you might not understand. To be able to see our people be infected and knowing that they don't have to be." (P15)

## Role as Church Leader

"I'm a total man pastor ... A shepherd from the head to the foot...Totally involved... With the sex life... Yeah, with their education. Total man." (P03)

## Situated in Church Teaching

"I say, 'God created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve.' And so we just touch on it slightly to let them know that it (same-sex relationships) is not biblical, that's not moral, that's not even human." (P14)

## Continued to Seek Info.

"If I'm out ... in the dentist or doctor's office, and I see magazines on sexual health, where before I would just, maybe pass that up and go for a sports magazines... now I'm knocking that wall, I'm digging into it now. So I'm more intrigued with what's going on, as I relates to HIV and STI." (P05)

## Recommended More Info

"Make it easy for them to give good information, so the newsletter should not be thick with narrative. It should be data and bullet points, and eye-catching topics." (P04)

## Contact

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## Next Steps

- Finalize and distribute survey to congregants (N=100), sampling plan includes faith leaders, their partner and/or other leaders in their FBO (i.e. spouse, deacon), & members of their congregation (Spring 2020)
- Collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data
- Publish Results, funding future work – expansion, specifically to southeast U.S.