



Project Vogue

This fact sheet contains highlights from a Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) recipient on the *Project Vogue* intervention, designed to increase viral load suppression and successfully engage Black Men who have Sex with Men (BMSM) with HIV in health care.

INTERVENTION OVERVIEW: Project Vogue is a recreation-based intervention that provides sexual health-related services in a stigma-free space for Black gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men with HIV, aged 18–45.

PRIORITY POPULATION: Black gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men with HIV.

ORGANIZATIONAL SETTING: GMHC (formerly Gay Men's Health Crisis), HIV/AIDS Service Organization (New York, NY).

FUNDING SOURCE(S): Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) RWHAP Part F: Special Projects of National Significance (SPNS) "Implementation of Evidence-Informed Behavioral Health Models to Improve HIV Health Outcomes for Black Men who have Sex with Men (BMSM)" Initiative

INTERVENTION PURPOSE/GOAL: This intervention aims to increase viral load suppression and improve longevity, quality of life, and other health outcomes for Black gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men.

INTERVENTION SUCCESSES: Project Vogue served a total of 80 clients. Of the 80 intervention participants:

- 82% were retained in care.
- 66% were prescribed antiretroviral therapy (ART).
- 72% reached viral suppression by 12-month follow-up.

SUSTAINABILITY: Employ a continuous process for sustainability planning in collaboration with other programs within your organization. GMHC secured funding and resources from other implementing partners to allow integration of a mobile platform (*GET!*) into the intervention. GMHC continually engaged with medical/community partners to solicit additional resources from private funders, and the New York State and City health departments to support sustained implementation.



INTERVENTION CORE ELEMENTS:

Involve Leadership. Implementing Project Vogue may require resources beyond those typically available to support linkage to and retention in care, so having leadership support at the onset is critical.

Determine Infrastructure Capacity. Assess whether your facility has a recreation-based safe drop-in space to use, with space to provide privacy for intake and other intervention activities.

Hire and Train Staff. To serve the priority population, it is recommended that key program staff are members of the community. Once selected, train staff on Motivational Interviewing, trauma-informed care, HIV Navigation Services, and cultural responsiveness.

Establish Clinical Partners. Establish reciprocal memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with clinical partners to achieve project outcomes.

Establish a Community Advisory Board (CAB) and Share Intervention. A CAB is a group of volunteers who consult on program activities. For this intervention, it is essential to have a CAB that comprises Black gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men who can advise on all aspects of the program, including marketing materials and client recruitment.

Develop and Implement Client Recruitment Strategy.

In addition to in-house recruitment among current clients, connect with House & Ball mothers, fathers, and other influential figures in the community to promote Project Vogue among their participants.

Determine Eligibility. During the recruitment process, screen potential clients for eligibility using an electronic intake tool. Clients who are not eligible for the intervention can be referred to other departments/programs for further support.

Develop Individual Care Plans and Provide Clinical Case Management. Provide case management services and develop an individual action plan for each client. Help reduce barriers to care and support access to applicable HIV care, mental health treatment, substance use disorder treatment, adherence counseling, benefits programs, and health insurance.

Maintain Ongoing Engagement. Stay engaged with clients who have participated in the program. HIV is a chronic condition that needs to be monitored and Black gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men require peer support along the HIV care continuum.



INTERVENTION STAFFING:

- **Program Director:** Provides oversight and technical support for all components of the program.
- **Program Evaluator:** Serves as the Data Manager for the program and assists in supporting service delivery and promoting continuous quality improvement.
- **Program Coordinator:** Responsible for overall management and oversight of the program. Provides direct support to all Peer Navigation Ambassadors, completes all client intakes and brief interventions, and submits programmatic reports.
- **Peer Navigation Ambassadors (PNAs) (2–3 positions):** Conduct outreach, escort clients to appointments, conduct linkage navigation services and re-engagement efforts, and maintain content on Get! App.



IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES:

HIV stigma and mental health stigma. HIV stigma and mental health stigma negatively affected participation in behavioral health services. Organizations should not assume that existing referral mechanisms will work for Black gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. To address this issue, Project Vogue developed customized feedback mechanisms between behavioral health services and intervention staff to monitor completion of service referrals and attendance of appointments.

Disparities with access to technology/Internet. Not all clients had adequate access to tools which would make their online engagement with the intervention possible. These limitations resulted in high cancellation rates and limited participation in virtual sessions. To address this, at enrollment, organizations should assess their clients' technology capacity and needs to determine factors which may affect program delivery.

High staff turnover. During the intervention, GMHC experienced high attrition rates, especially among PNAs. Agencies intending to engage with peer-level roles should create a clear and tangible path for professional growth within the organization. If resources allow, engage peers to work more hours or be hired on a full-time basis so they can enjoy more benefits and opportunities for growth. Agencies should also have tailored clinical supervision or a peer support mechanism in place for the peers and cross-train intervention staff within the larger department(s).

RESOURCES:

Project Vogue Original Intervention Overview and Materials: https://targethiv.org/intervention/project-vogue?utm_source=bpURL

Project Vogue Implementation Manual: https://targethiv.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2022-12/BMSM_SPNS_GMHC_Vogue_Implementation_Manual_2022.pdf

HRSA IHIP Project Vogue Intervention Implementation Guide: https://targethiv.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2023-09/IHIP_Project_Vogue_Implementation_Guide.pdf