

Connected?:

Public Health, Supportive Services and Vocational/Employment Services for PLWHA

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National Working Positive Coalition (NWPC)



- Who we are:
 - Persons living with HIV/AIDS, service providers, educators and researchers in HIV and employment
- Mission
 - Promote research, development and implementation of effective practices in employment services
 - Coordinate sharing and dissemination of this information
 - Advocate for work options and opportunities for people living with HIV/AIDS

Overview

- Discuss development of the NWPC Vocational Development and Employment Needs Survey
- Provide snapshot of initial findings relating to
 - Knowledge of VR services
 - Workplace disclosure
 - Impact of employment status on health and prevention
- Discuss implications for vocational rehabilitation practice and research

Methods

- Survey research methods were used to identify the vocational development and employment needs of individuals with HIV/AIDS
- Funded by NIDRR Switzer Fellowship
- Instrument development
 - Revision of 2004 survey
 - Focus groups different regions of country
 - Review of literature
 - Expert panel and pilot testing

Survey Format

- 12 page survey
 - Paper and internet formats (English & Spanish)
 - June 2008 through October 2009
 - Major sections of survey
 - Demographic information
 - Knowledge, use and satisfaction with VR services
 - Workplace issues (employed respondents)
 - Considering work issues (unemployed respondents)
 - Health status
- Funded by NIDRR & NYS AIDS Institute

Recruitment

- Developed collaborative relationships with national HIV/AIDS organizations
 - Positive Women's Network
 - National Minority AIDS Council
 - TheBody.com
 - AIDS Alliance
- Promoted survey at conferences
- Eligibility
 - At least 18 years old and HIV+

Sample Demographics



	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ 2,538 respondents	65%	34%
■ Mean Age:	46	46
■ Race:		
■ Black	30%	54%
■ White	43%	24%
■ Latino	18%	24%
■ Sexual Orientation:		
■ Heterosexual	28%	88%
■ Gay	65%	4%
■ Bisexual	7%	8%

Sample Demographics

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ Earn \$15,000 per year or less	49%	68%
■ High school/GED or less	32%	48%
■ HIV status:		
■ HIV	64%	72%
■ AIDS	36%	28%
■ Employment status:		
■ Employed	33%	30%
■ Not working	67%	70%

Impact of HIV on Employment

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ Employed when diagnosed	71%	50%
■ Currently employed	33%	30%
■ Never worked	3%	11%

Knowledge of employment-related laws

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	47%	35%
■ Reasonable Accommodations	21%	14%
■ Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)	31%	26%
■ Workforce Investment Act (WIA)	9%	9%



Knowledge of employment services/incentives

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ Services		
■ State Vocational Rehabilitation	31%	27%
■ One Stop Career Centers	16%	18%
■ Work Incentives		
■ Ticket to Work	23%	22%
■ Trial Work Period	23%	13%
■ Extended Medicare	11%	8%
■ <u>No knowledge of laws, or incentives</u>	26%	31%

Employment Discrimination

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ No employment discrimination	44%	59%
■ Types of discrimination based on:		
■ HIV	21%	17%
■ Race	16%	12%
■ Sexual orientation	26%	3%
■ Age	15%	10%
■ Gender (female)	0%	13%
■ Incarceration	10%	9%
■ Disability	9%	7%
■ Ethnicity	7%	5%

Results for Employed Participants

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ Employed	33%	30%
■ Work related to HIV/AIDS	34%	57%



Does employer know your HIV status?

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ People working in HIV-related jobs		
■ Employer knows HIV status	90%	95%
■ People not working in HIV-related jobs		
■ Employer knows HIV status	35%	26%

Use of Job Accommodations

16%	Change in work schedule
9%	Allow time for medications
6%	Change in job duties
5%	Allow to be close to bathroom
3%	Reassign to another position
42%	None – have not requested any



Perceptions of work and health

	Employer:	
	<u>ASO</u>	<u>Not ASO</u>
■ Being employed improved my outlook on the future	91%	76%
■ My health has interfered with my ability to work	27%	9%
■ Working negatively affected my health	11%	20%
■ Work interfered with my ability to take meds correctly	6%	12%

*ASO = AIDS Service Organization

Results for Unemployed Participants

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ Not working	1,092	593
■ Varied perceptions of ability to work		
■ Able to work	43%	40%
■ Not sure if could work	32%	28%
■ Not able to work	25%	35%



Considering Work: Important Factors

- Increase income 87%
- Feeling useful/productive 84%
- Access to benefits [life insurance/retirement] 76%
- Being around people 72%
- My identity as a worker 64%
- Being role model 64%



Positive Outcome Expectations

If I go to work... (Percent Agree)

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ My outlook will improve	63%	61%
■ I'll be able to take meds correctly	49%	46%
■ My mental health will improve	50%	46%

Impact of Employment on Health

Since my current job, my... (if previously unemployed)

		<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ Self-care	increased	47%	56%
■ CD-4 count	increased	16%	22%
■ Med adherence	increased	17%	30%
■ Alcohol use	<i>decreased</i>	34%	33%
■ Drug use	<i>decreased</i>	34%	32%
■ Unprotected sex	<i>decreased</i>	31%	28%
■ Number of sex partners	<i>decreased</i>	35%	32%



Negative Outcome Expectations/Barriers

If I go to work...(Percent Agree)

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ I will lose my disability income benefits	46%	42%
■ I will face discrimination	34%	30%
■ I will not have health insurance	32%	32%
■ Others will find out I have HIV	30%	4%
■ My housing will be at risk	26%	26%
■ I need help to develop my job skills	54%	56%
■ No employment services in my area	57%	64%



Summary

- HIV has had a dramatic impact on the employment and economic status of the respondents
- Majority of the respondents reported perceived benefits associated with work
- Respondents had very limited knowledge of vocational services, organizations or other related resources.
 - Women had less awareness than men
- About 25%-30% of the sample were not able to work, which suggests that work is not a healthy option for all

Summary

- Respondents face high levels of discrimination and the majority do not report discrimination
- Employment is related to positive health and prevention outcomes for many
 - Need to attend to those where outcomes are not positive
- Many report ability to work and a need to increase their income as primary factor in considering work

Summary

- Respondents report many barriers to employment and few supports to address these barriers
- Employment is associated with positive health and prevention outcomes for many and negative outcomes for a substantial minority
 - Reflects episodic nature of HIV for many
 - Suggests need for intervention at points of work transition
- Many unemployed respondents anticipate that employment would lead to improved health and reduced risk factors associated with HIV prevention

Limitations and Future Research

- Initial descriptive findings
 - Need more sophisticated analysis to account for missing data and confounding influences
- Volunteer sample
- More in-depth analysis will help to better understand factors that lead to different outcomes
 - Ongoing findings will be posted on NWPC webpage: workingpositive.net

Acknowledgements

- NYS Department of Health, AIDS Institute
- National Institute of Disability & Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)
- Maricela Carrera
- Paul Datti & PSU Research Team
- Eda Valero-Figueira
- Brendan Galivan
- Heather Homan
- Mark Misrok, National Working Positive Coalition

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