

# Epidemic through a pandemic: Strategies to support Black women with HIV during COVID- 19 pandemic

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**Black**  
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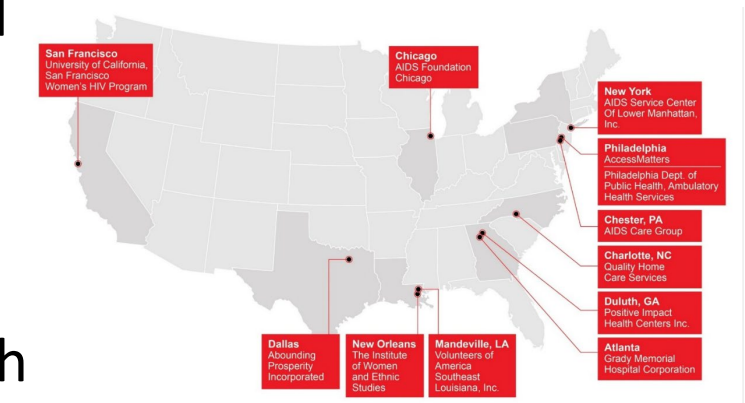
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# Introduction

- Black women bear a disproportionate HIV/AIDS disease burden, and higher HIV-related mortality.<sup>1</sup>
- Black women are less likely to be linked and retained in care and have lower rates of viral suppression.<sup>2</sup>
- Vulnerability for HIV infection and inequities in HIV outcomes are influenced by the interplay between individual level factors and the social contexts of Black women.<sup>3</sup>
- COVID-19 pandemic compounded these inequities in HIV outcomes
- The 12 SPNS grantees redesigned and developed innovative strategies to provide services to cis and trans Black women with HIV thereby improving their health outcomes even during the COVID- 19 pandemic.



# Methods and Activities

- **SETTING:** 12 Special Projects of National Significance (SPNS) demonstration sites implementing evidence informed bundled interventions across the U.S. as part of the BWF initiative.
- **PARTICIPANTS:** Site staff (e.g., frontline, administrators) and partners (e.g., subcontractor) working on the BWF initiative.
- **DATA COLLECTION:** Virtual Group interviews conducted at baseline with site teams captured the impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of services

## QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS:

- 12 baseline site interviews and monthly REDCap surveys were coded, and themes were derived by direct content analysis outlined by Hsieh and Shannon.<sup>4</sup>
- Data were coded using NVivo 12 (QSR International) text-based analytic software.
- Themes were used to identify challenges, strategies and best practices adapted by the different organizations to provide care during the pandemic.

# Results: Challenges to HIV Care

*“These are the same issues that was around before COVID it just got worse”*

Hesitant to attend in- person medical visits

Lost access to care and treatment due to lack of appropriate technology

COVID vaccine hesitancy from historical medical mistrust

COVID triggered memories of early HIV epidemic

Housing instability and food insecurity exacerbated due to job loss

# Lessons Learned: Strategies Adapted



# Limitations

- There are ongoing efforts made by few sites recruiting justice involved Black women with HIV who are lost to care once released.
- Best practices adapted by these sites to mitigate these issues needs to be captured to complete the analysis.

# References

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