



A TelePrEP Program to Reach Rural Louisianans for HIV Preventive Services

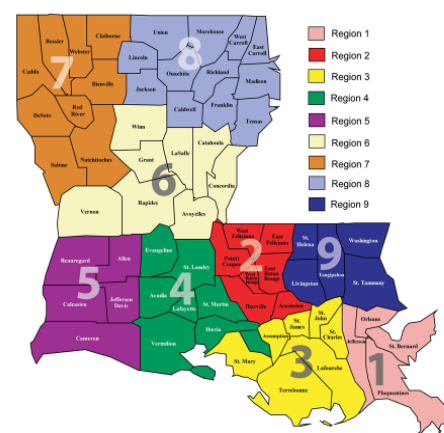
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Introduction

- Barriers to effective HIV prevention with pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) exist for populations who could most benefit from its services, including those living in the rural Southern United States.
- TelePrEP—providing PrEP care through remote means rather than face-to-face encounters—can help overcome barriers related to access, such as transportation, stigma, and cost.
- In May 2018, Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) launched its TelePrEP program to provide statewide PrEP services, with concerted efforts to make TelePrEP available and accessible to clients in rural parishes.
- Telehealth services include consults done via telephone audio only or two-way video conferencing, remote access to a navigator via phone or email, and mail order prescription fills.



Methods

Eligibility

- Louisiana residents 18 and older who are insured and HIV negative
- Outcomes were assessed via chart abstraction for those inquiring from May 2018 – June 2020

Definitions

- Inquiry** – Client initiated contact via phone or online form
- Consented & enrolled** – Client completed enrollment paperwork, including consent for services
- Visit with clinician** – Client completed PrEP clinical visit
- Baseline labs completed** – Client completed baseline labs at a reference lab site
- Prescribed PrEP** – PrEP prescription mailed to client
- PrEP persistence at 3 & 6 months** – Labs completed at 3 months; labs completed at 6 months

Statistical Analysis

- Patient characteristics were summarized with categorical variables presented as count (%), including demographic breakdown: age, race, gender, sexual orientation, and insurance status

Results

Figure 1. LA TelePrEP Program Cascade

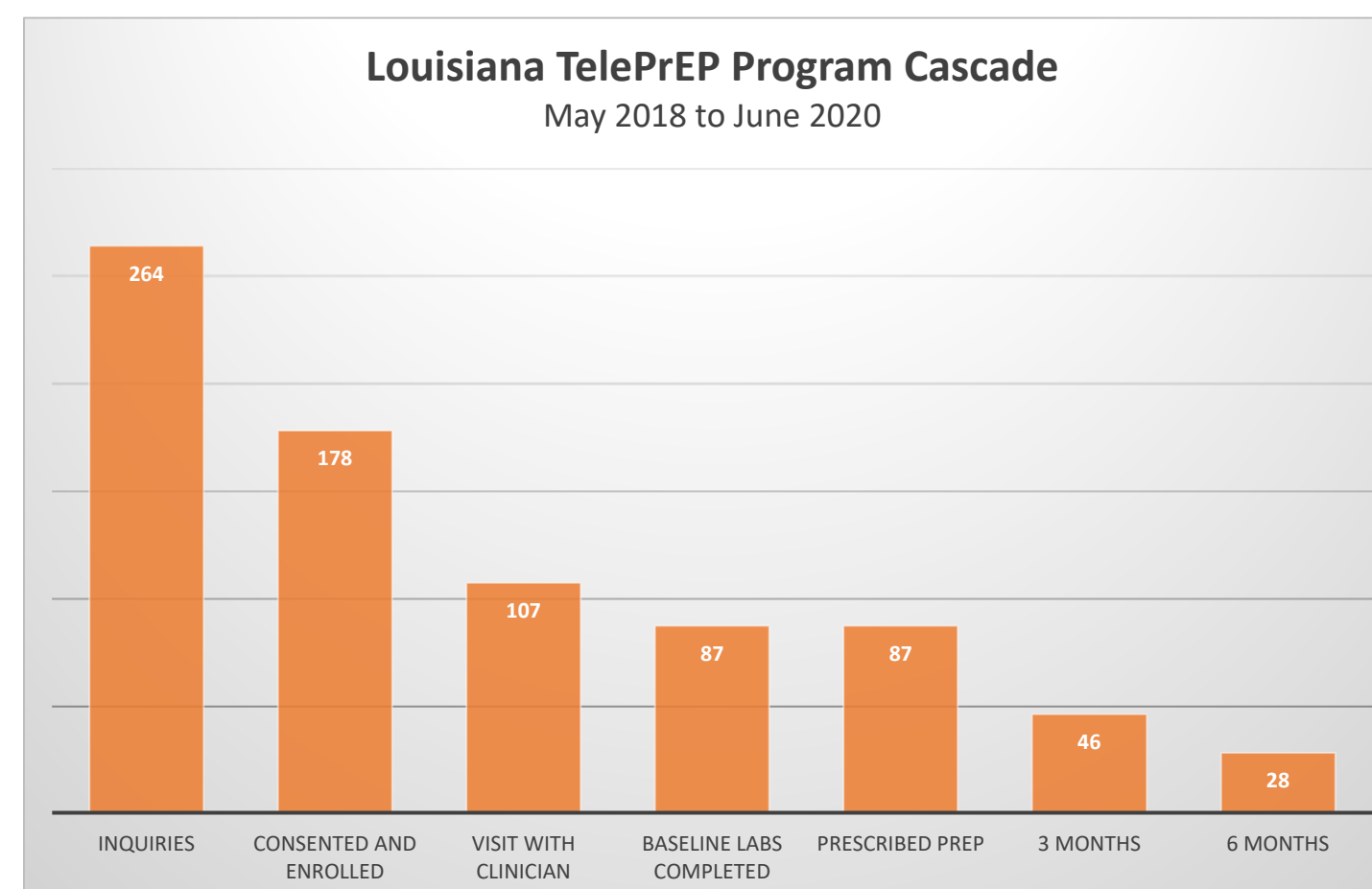
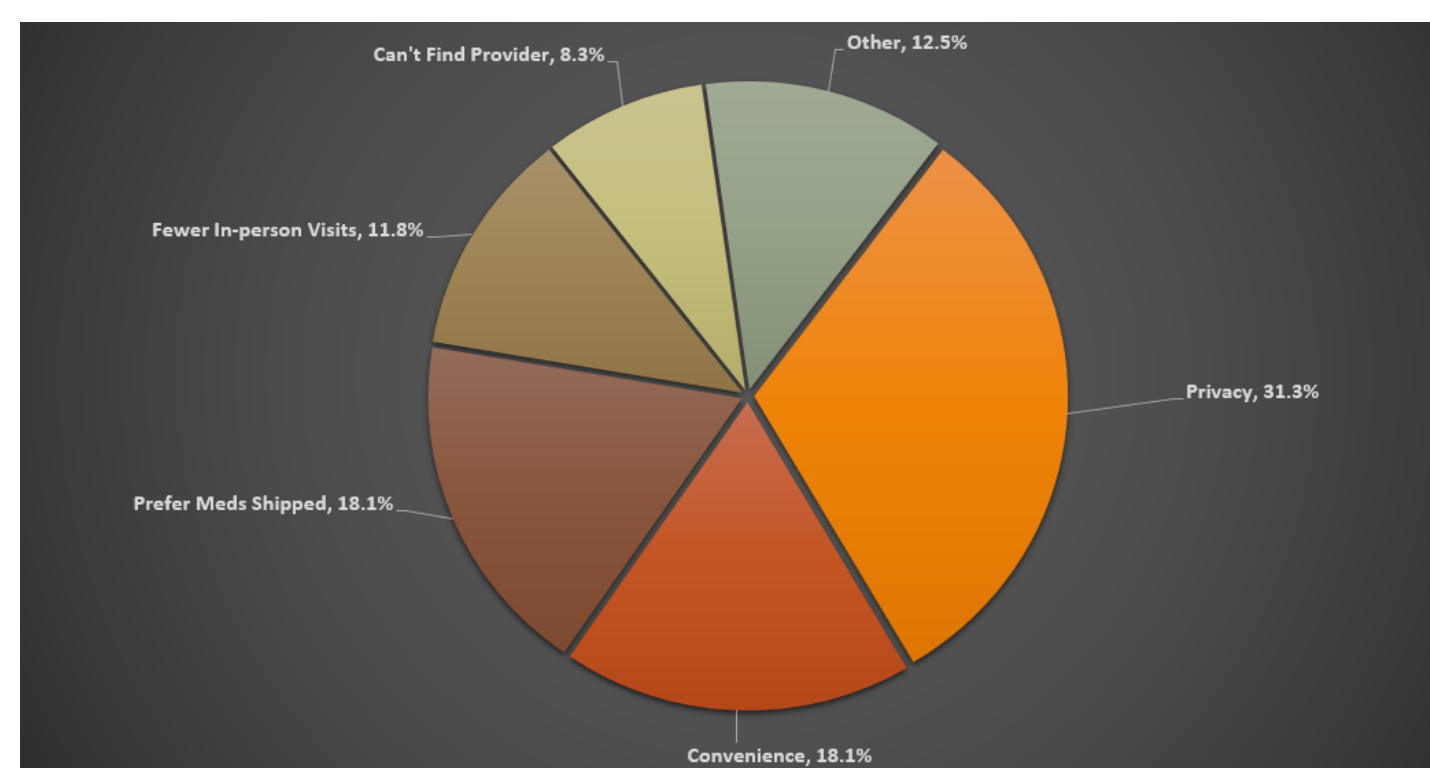


Figure 2. Why are you interested in TelePrEP? (n=144)



Summary of Results

- Most clients were interested in TelePrEP care for reasons related to convenience and privacy
- Over half of clients (55%) learned about TelePrEP through state-run Parish Health Units, the STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program website, and online search
- As of June 2020, 48 patients were engaged in care, of whom 52% are ages 25-44 years, 28% are African-American, 82% are gay and bisexual men, and 48% have Medicaid
- Although retention is suboptimal, the LA TelePrEP program has reached clients from all nine regions of LA, with 61% of ongoing clients being from rural regions

Table 1. Demographics of those prescribed PrEP (n=48)

	Total Inquiries	Active PrEP Patients
Age (n=188)	Frequency	Frequency
Under 18	1 (0.5%)	0 (0%)
18 to 24	64 (32.5%)	14 (29.2%)
25 to 34	75 (38.3%)	18 (37.5%)
35 to 44	31 (15.4%)	7 (14.6%)
45 to 54	19 (9.6%)	7 (14.6%)
55 to 64	6 (3.2%)	2 (4.2%)
65+	1 (0.5%)	0 (0%)
Total*	197 (100%)	48 (100%)
Race (n=213)	Frequency	Frequency
White	99 (46.5%)	31 (67.4%)
Black	89 (41.8%)	13 (28.3%)
American Indian / Alaskan Native	10 (4.7%)	0 (0%)
Multiracial	8 (3.8%)	1 (2.2%)
Asian	4 (1.9%)	1 (2.2%)
Native HI/Pacific Islander	1 (0.5%)	0 (0%)
Declined	1 (0.5%)	0 (0%)
Other	1 (0.5%)	0 (0%)
Total*	213 (100%)	46 (100%)
Gender (n=230)	Frequency	Frequency
Male	181 (78.7%)	40 (83.3%)
Female	49 (21.3%)	8 (16.7%)
Total*	230 (100%)	48 (100%)
Sexual Orientation (n=207)	Frequency	Frequency
Gay	115 (55.6%)	33 (73.3%)
Straight/ Heterosexual	52 (25.1%)	8 (17.8%)
Bisexual	34 (16.4%)	4 (8.9%)
Don't Know	4 (1.9%)	0 (0%)
Other	2 (1%)	0 (0%)
Total*	207 (100%)	45 (100%)
Insurance Status (n=219)	Frequency	Frequency
Medicaid	95 (43.4%)	23 (47.9%)
Private	82 (37.4%)	23 (47.9%)
Uninsured	26 (11.9%)	0 (0%)
Medicare	7 (3.2%)	2 (4.2%)
Don't Know	3 (1.4%)	0 (0%)
Other	6 (2.7%)	0 (0%)
Total*	219 (100%)	48 (100%)

*All data fields are not required for participants, resulting in missing data. The totals in this table reflect the number of people who responded to that item.

Conclusions

- The Louisiana TelePrEP program has effectively reached populations in rural parts of the state
- While initial interest is high, further efforts are needed to improve distal steps along this care continuum
- The LA TelePrEP program has been integrated into the "Ending the HIV Epidemic" initiative in East Baton Rouge, one of three US Jumpstart high priority counties