

Cost of a Patient Navigation Community-based Program for People Who Use Substances Living with HIV in San Juan, PR

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Background

People who use substances (PWUS) living with HIV may benefit from dedicated programs to enhance their engagement in care, but there is limited data on the cost and feasibility of implementing these programs in different settings.

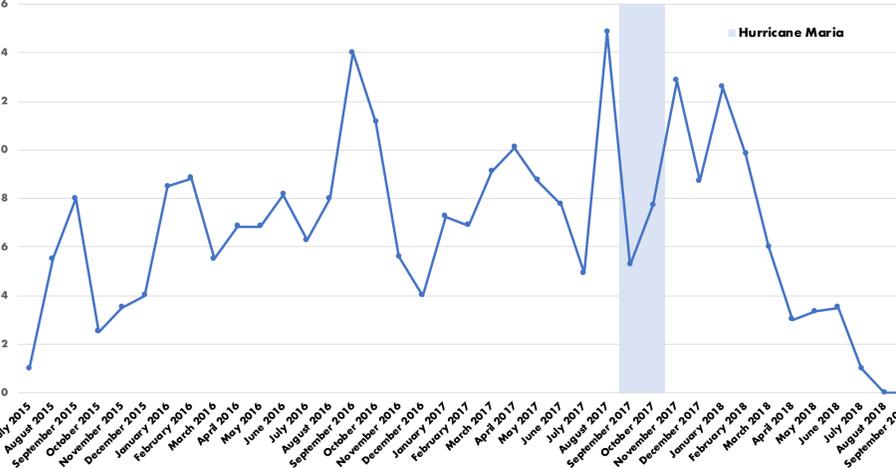
Objective

- We evaluated the cost of addressing HIV care access and retention through dedicated patient navigation (PN) services to urban PWUS.
- Data were collected alongside a randomized controlled trial using a step-wedge design in 5 zones in San Juan, PR (NCT01792752).

Methods

- We used micro-costing techniques to estimate costs from the program perspective and categorized them as start-up, variable, or time-dependent (2018 US dollars).
- Labor costs were calculated by multiplying services utilized by time estimates; unit costs were from nationally representative sources.
- Non-labor costs and overhead were derived from study logs and financial records.
- We used nationally representative estimates of labor and travel costs to infer estimated costs for programs located elsewhere in the United States.
- Participant time costs are reported separately.

Sessions Per Active Patient Navigator (PN) Per Month



HIV patient navigation can serve difficult-to-reach people who use substances at \$30-\$65 per session for an average of 8 sessions.

Results

- 28 patient navigators were trained and delivered services to 260 participants across 1,974 participant sessions between July 2015 and September 2018.
- Each participant received an average of 7.7 (range 32) sessions; each patient navigator delivered an average of 6.7 sessions per month (range 14.8).
- Patient navigator services cost an average of \$209 per participant (\$29 per participant session).
- Costs elsewhere in the US would be more than twice as high primarily due to higher labor costs.
- Participant time costs were an additional \$62 per participant (\$8 per participant session).

Set-Up Costs (2018 US \$)

Cost Component	Base Case Cost	US National Cost
Train the Trainers	\$5,693	\$7,694
PN training		
Motivational Interviewing	\$5,634	\$12,736
PN Service Delivery	\$13,552	\$20,536
Role-plays	\$2,633	\$5,724
Overhead	\$5,704	\$17,938
Total Cost	\$33,217	\$64,629
Total Cost Per PN	\$1,186	\$2,308

Variable and Time-dependent Costs (2018 US \$)

Cost Component	Base Case Average Per Session	US National Average Per Session	Base Case Average Per Participant	US National Average Per Participant
Program Perspective				
<i>Variable Costs</i>				
Session Time	\$14	\$31	\$105	\$235
Travel	\$3	\$3	\$13	\$13
Overhead	\$5	\$16	\$38	\$115
Total	\$22	\$49	\$155	\$362
<i>Time-dependent Costs</i>				
Weekly Team Meetings	\$3	\$8	\$26	\$58
New Staff Training	\$2	\$4	\$17	\$29
Overhead	\$2	\$5	\$12	\$38
Total	\$7	\$16	\$55	\$125
Total	\$29	\$65	\$210	\$487
Participant Perspective				
<i>Variable Costs</i>				
Session Time	\$7	\$7	\$57	\$57
Travel	\$1	\$1	\$6	\$6
Total	\$8	\$8	\$62	\$62

Acknowledgements

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