

Empower U

Miami, FL

The Initiative

The Emerging Strategies to Improve Health Outcomes for People Aging with HIV (Aging with HIV) Initiative supports and evaluates 10 demonstration sites as they implement groundbreaking interventions that seek to improve whole-person care of people with HIV ages 50 and older served by the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP).

The Program

The *Educating and Empowering People Aging with HIV* (E&E) Program enhanced a suite of services for older adults with HIV to include dental care, nutritional counseling, a social support group, and cognitive support to improve physical health markers and overall health outcomes. Through this intervention, Empower U:

- Screened for behavioral and psychosocial needs, as well as for comorbidities.
- Integrated client services for 12 months by referring clients to behavioral health, dental, or nutritional services based on need.
- Enrolled clients into a six-week social support group to promote psychosocial engagement.

Notable Client Outcomes



Increased retention in HIV care

Defined as two HIV medical care encounters in the last 12 months, at least 90 days apart.



Improvements to **fall risk, anxiety, and depression scores** over the course of the intervention

Total clients completing the evaluation: 65

Implementation Lessons Learned

Empower U benefited from a number of facilitators and worked as a team to overcome several barriers.

Facilitators



Having the right staffing (e.g., qualifications, number of staff, staff bandwidth) was important for implementing intervention activities effectively and ensuring day-to-day operations ran smoothly.



Incentives for participating in the intervention should be relevant (e.g., nutritious refreshments, healthy meals) and clearly communicated to clients to maintain their engagement.



Building community and client trust was important for keeping clients engaged in the intervention. This was accomplished through a community advisory board that provided program input and outreach to clients via a care coordinator.

Challenges



Complex and varied client needs (e.g., transportation, health status), prompted staff to employ **creative, individualized approaches** to increase client engagement.



Team members had to conduct **additional staff outreach** to maintain clients in care.



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