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Adapting an HIV prevention intervention, project RESPECT, for young, substance using African American women

Despite an overall decline in new HIV cases, HIV continues to be a major public health problem for African American women. For many at-risk populations, the site where they obtain most of their medical care is at the emergency department (ED). The ED presents a unique public health context in which to intervene and interrupt behavioral patterns that promote risk of health disparities. The RESPECT intervention seems well suited for adaptation in an ED setting. RESPECT is an individual-level, client-focused, HIV prevention intervention based on the Theory of Reasoned Action and Social Cognitive Theory. By changing the RESPECT theoretical framework to include theories with documented cultural relevance for young substance using African American women, the Sexual Script Theory and the Theory of Gender and Power, we incorporate sexual scripts and gender driven beliefs into the RESPECT intervention and address gender based power differentials through an established HIV prevention intervention for the first time. Our research team will design the adaptation in a way that will integrate within a routine ED visit without interrupting clinical care. Formative work towards this effort was facilitated through a development study where 30 interviews among young, substance using African American women recruited from a private (n=15) and public (n=15) hospital's ED revealed findings consistent with the literature on drivers of high risk sex behaviors. Primary predictors of high risk sex revealed gender-based power differentials; thereby, supporting utility of a theoretical framework that includes the Sexual Script Theory and the Theory of Gender and Power.

Biography

Mandy J Hill has completed her DrPH from University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UT Health), School of Public Health and Postdoctoral experiences from UT Health, McGovern Medical School. She is the Assistant Research Director of the Department of Emergency Medicine at UT Health McGovern Medical School, the sixth largest medical school in the USA. She has published 21 papers in reputed journals, including 9 first authored, peer reviewed publications in diverse areas with a common theme of addressing health disparities among disadvantaged minority populations, particularly young adult and African American women.

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