Positive Links: Using Warm Technology to Achieve Retention in Care

Presented by:
- Melissa Werner, AIDS United
- Rebecca Dillingham, University of Virginia
- Kim Williams, UVA Ryan White Clinic
Housekeeping

• All attendees are in “listen only” mode
• Use the chat feature to communicate with the group and to ask questions
• Email Sarah Hashmall at shashmall@aidsunited.org with any technical difficulties
• A recording of this webinar will be available on our website
AIDS United

making the promise a reality

Community Building
Policy & Advocacy
Formative Research
Grantmaking

Strategy

Capacity Building
Technical Assistance
Webinar Goal

To provide an overview of how a downloadable smartphone application can help people living with HIV stay in care
Webinar Objectives

• Explain how use of a smartphone application can enhance retention in care for people living with HIV
• List three factors to consider in planning to use a smartphone application for retention in care
• Describe how “warm technology” could be used in their work setting
Webinar Agenda

- Retention in Care Initiative Overview
- Overview of the Positive Links Program
- The Positive Links Client Experience
- Q & A
Retention in Care (RiC) Initiative

- Three-year initiative focused on retaining people living with HIV in care
- Funded by M·A·C AIDS Fund
- Provided care to 603 people living with HIV
- Granted almost 3 million dollars to the field
RiC Initiative (continued)

- Innovative approaches:
  - Navigation and support from peers
  - “Housing first” model
  - Trauma-informed care
  - Use of smart phones to support retention in care

- Focus on underserved populations:
  - Transgender persons
  - Women, children, and families
  - Homeless individuals
# Retention in Care Grantees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grantee</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mazzoni Center</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christie’s Place</td>
<td>San Diego, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Virginia</td>
<td>Charlottesville, VA</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOOM!Health</td>
<td>Bronx, NY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institute for Public Health Innovation</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Open Door, Inc.</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, PA</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIDS Alabama</td>
<td>Birmingham, AL</td>
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Rebecca Dillingham, MD, MPH
Center for Global Health
Harrison Distinguished Teaching Associate Professor of Medicine
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA
With Gratitude

• PL Team:
  – Rebecca Dillingham, MD/MPH
  – Karen Ingersoll, PhD
  – George Reynolds, HDT
  – Ava Lena Waldman, MHS/CHES/CCRP
  – Tabor Flickinger, MD
  – Wendy Cohn, PhD
  – Mark Conaway, PhD
  – Colleen Laurence, MPH
  – Erin Wispelwey
  – Erin Plews-Ogan
  – Claire deBolt
  – Anna Greenlee
  – Liz Olmsted
  – Dana Argiro
HIV Care Challenges in (Rural) VA

- Stigma
- Poor access to Transportation
- Poverty
- Isolation
- Alcohol/drug use
- Mental health challenges

Mobile technology (mHealth) can facilitate interventions addressing one or more challenges to living well with HIV when and where clients want and need it.
SMS to Promote Adherence to ART

- Relatively small and short studies in diverse populations
- Acceptable and feasible
- Promising effects
- Mostly focused on medication adherence
- Perceived as supportive across cultures – “Someone cares…”

# App vs. Text Interventions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>App</th>
<th>Text</th>
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</table>
| • More secure  
• Can send more messages without added cost  
• *Consumer demand*  
• *Rich media views, videos and community functions*  
• May facilitate overcoming other barriers to engagement | • Better studied  
• Phones are cheaper  
• Harder to crack phone screens when dropped |
Our App Development Strategies

- User-based design
- Self-monitoring
- Shrink “distance”
Check in with Kathryn Dort

When: 2014-03-13 at 08:00:00
Where: UVA Ryan White Clinic

Confirm: Yes [ ] No [ ]

Proposed Alternate Date: 

Submit

Positive Links Coordinators

Point person for the Positive Links program; meets with clients to discuss starting treatment, address barriers to care.

Colleen Laurence MPH

Phone: (434) 465-9818
Email: cel2j@virginia.edu
West Complex, Hospital Drive, 5th floor, 1300 Jefferson Park Ave., Charlottesville, VA, 22908

Erin Wispelwey

Phone: (434) 465-9816
Messages InBox

Thursday May 5, 2016 - 1:55 PM
From: GLR
Shift in perspective
I thought it would be better to respond on a...

Thursday May 5, 2016 - 1:54 PM
From: GLR
Project phone and end of study
Hi! I saw your question about the project ph...

Thursday May 5, 2016 - 1:52 PM
From: GLR
New version of PositiveLinks app is available.
New version of the PositiveLinks app is avail...
“The questions make me focus on my mood and my stress and makes me more in touch with myself you can say. When it pops up, it makes me stop and think. I usually don’t think about that kind of thing.” (PL Participant)
Stress Reduction Tools

Audio Files

Forgiveness Meditation
Led by Susan Stone, PhD. UVA Mindfulness Center Audio Recordings. 19 mins.

Body Scan Audio Recording
Led by John Schorking, MD. UVA Mindfulness Center Audio Recordings. 16 mins.

Mindful Breathing
Led by John Schorking, MD. UVA Mindfulness Center Audio Recordings. 10 mins.

Kindness Meditation
Led by Susan Stone, PhD. UVA Mindfulness Center Audio Recordings. 10 mins.

5 Minute Mindful Breathing
Led by John Schorking, MD. UVA Mindfulness Center Audio Recordings. 10 mins.

Stress Reduction Practice Videos

Resources
**Medication History**

**March 2014**

- **Meds**: 7/7 questions answered. Reported 100% adherence.
- **Stress**: 7/7 questions answered. Average stress 6.1. This is 3.3 higher than last week.
- **Mood**: 7/7 questions answered. Average mood 4.3. This is 2.1 higher than last week.

Are you reaching your health goals? If not let the Positive Links team know how we can help!

**Weekly Summary March 30-April 5**
Profile

aSportsFan
Joined: 5/5/2016

Achievements:

- Welcome to PositiveLinks
  Thursday May 5, 2016 - 1:37 PM

- 1 App Launch
  Monday May 2, 2016 - 5:10 PM

- 10 App Launches
  Monday May 2, 2016 - 5:10 PM

- 100 App Launches
  Monday May 2, 2016 - 5:10 PM

CD4 Level

Most Recent: 879/μL

Viral Load

Most Recent: 60/mL

100 App Launches

You have used the PositiveLinks app 100 times. Go for 100!

OK
Summary (Version 2.0)
Dashboard (Version 2.0)
Medication Adherence Tracking – majority of the patients that I work with have med. adherence problems. This feature on the app allows me to gauge where they are personally in the action plan and if we need to address any barriers/concerns. 

(PL Care Provider)

PL helps all providers have a common view of a patient’s progress, or their struggles. Providers can have a better understanding of some issues patients are going through and provide help before some situations get to later stages.

(PL Care Provider)
Transportation to Clinic

• Participants travel on average 38.24 miles to clinic. [SD 37.48] (range 1–126)

• Participants travel on average 50.27 minutes to clinic [SD 34.74] (range 2–127)
You asked the Positive Links team: Will the Affordable care act affect our ability to get meds? The clinic social worker Bruce Ellsworth Responded: Anyone currently on ADAP (AIDS Drug Assistance Program) or the Pre-Existing Insurance Program will be helped to enroll in one of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) plans through the Virginia Health Care Exchange. The VA Dept of Health will assist with premiums, co-pays and some deductibles (for HIV-specific care). Medication co-payments will be covered. People with low-incomes may also qualify for additional cost savings through what are called subsidies. When a person enrolls, they will know if they qualify for this extra help. This will be a big change for people and it will
“You get to talk to people who are going through exactly what you are going through. When you are down somebody uplifts you, when somebody else is down you can uplift them, it’s basically like one big family.” (Participant 31295)
## Who Uses the CMB?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Odds Ratio (95% CI)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
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<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>0.20 (0.05-0.84)</td>
<td>0.028*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Insurance</td>
<td>0.07 (0.01-0.41)</td>
<td>0.003*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsuppressed VL (VL&gt;50)</td>
<td>5.13 (1.13-23.30)</td>
<td>0.034*</td>
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Non-white, uninsured PLWH who have *detectable* viral loads are statistically most likely to post on the community message board. Literacy level, socioeconomic status, and HIV risk factor were not significant predictors.

The first Positive Links cohort was followed from September 2014 through May 2016. Seventy-five participants used the app.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Participant Characteristics</th>
<th>Percent (n)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>63% (47)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSM (Men who have sex with men)</td>
<td>41% (31)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incomes below 100% FPL</td>
<td>74% (56)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>44% (33)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homeless or unstably housed</td>
<td>26% (19)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food insecure</td>
<td>37% (28)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor transportation access</td>
<td>23% (17)</td>
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Highest users of the PL app were the least likely to meet federally mandated engagement-in-care benchmarks at baseline and were most likely to do so at 12 months. (pink line)
The Positive Links Program resulted in significant *increases* in CD4 count (top) and *decreases* in HIV viral load (bottom) over one year of follow-up (n=52).
Higher CD4 count and lower viral load means that the individuals who have achieved these goals can live healthier lives with fewer opportunistic infections!

Maintaining an undetectable HIV viral load vastly reduces the risk of passing the infection. Achieving this goal is a key to ending the epidemic in the south and around the world.
PL Recipe for *Warm* Technology

- **Design Strategies**
  - Secure!
  - Evidence-based
  - User-based design and participant ownership
  - Anticipated low literacy
  - Rigorous evaluation

- **Main Features**
  - Coordination of care
  - Self-monitoring
  - Social support
Warm Technology...

- Builds client skills for engagement.
- Facilitates health promotion and care by enhancing connections between clients and the care community.
- Can be adapted by care communities to serve diverse populations.
- Provides a cost-effective option to promote engagement and retention in care.
Next Steps

- Pilot integration into clinical care and EMR at UVa (May 2016–April 2017)
- Monitor process and clinical outcomes
- Seek partners for adaptation and implementation at additional sites (2017)
I don’t know if many of you realize it, but each and every one of us who uses this app is making a difference in someone else’s life battling every day of this new journey...We all are making a difference together one day, one app, and one click at a time.

(PL Participant)
Kim Williams
Client, Poet, and Advocate
Ryan White Clinic
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA
Questions and Answers