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Changes in sexual behaviors due to the utilization of PrEP as a preventive method for the transmission of HIV

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According to The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 33.4 million individuals throughout the world have been affected by HIV/AIDS in the last 30 years or so (Bonacquisti & Geller, 2013). The medication, Truvada, otherwise known as PrEP, has been introduced to serve as a harm reduction technique to combat the spread of HIV infection. PrEP is an antiretroviral drug that lowers the risk of HIV exposure. This is a qualitative study examining the sexual behaviors of gay and bisexual men prescribed PrEP as a preventive method for the transmission of HIV. I (Michael Dean Kaltenbach) conducted 30 semi-structured in-depth interviews of people who had been prescribed PrEP for at least 30 days in three cities: Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and New York City. The results indicate that contextual factors shaped the sexual behaviors of participants on PrEP, leading them to lower risk at times, and elevate it at others. PrEP caused individuals to experience changes within their communication patterns with their medical providers and their sexual partners. The results shed light on the way people on PrEP engage in sexual and health-seeking behaviors and help to develop a blueprint for the way service providers engage with this community.

Biography

Michael Dean Kaltenbach is a part-time lecturer at Rutgers University School of social work, teaching a course in human behavior in the social environment. He has previously taught Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) and Master of Social Work (MSW) level courses in crisis intervention and brief therapy, introduction to social welfare / human services, communication in social work practice, human behavior and the social environment, and emotional disorders in childhood and adolescents at Temple University and the University of Southern California.

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