



ATPM Member Spotlight

Research Project Highlight

HoMBReS: Hombres Manteniendo Bienestar y Relaciones Saludables (Men: Men Maintaining Wellbeing and Healthy Relationships)

is an ongoing sexual risk reduction intervention designed to reduce STD and HIV infection among recently-arrived, non-English-speaking Latino men who are members of a multi-county Latino soccer league in central North Carolina, a region of the US with both the fastest growing Latino population and disproportionate STD and HIV infection rates. Supported by a cooperative agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through the Association for Prevention Teaching and Research, *HoMBReS* was developed in partnership with the local Latino community using community-based participatory research (CBPR).

Scott D. Rhodes, PhD, MPH, CHES, who is based in the Department of Social Sciences and Health Policy in the Division of Public Health Sciences at Wake Forest University School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, NC, serves as Principal Investigator on this intervention study officially entitled: *HoMBReS: A Lay Health Advisor Approach to STD Prevention*. This study is a three-year quasi-experimental research study designed to:

- Develop, implement, and evaluate a lay health advisor (LHA) intervention to reduce sexual risk behaviors among members of the soccer league and increase utilization of STD/HIV counseling, testing, and treatment services;
- Evaluate the changes experienced by male Latino men by being trained and serving as LHAs;
- Assess the feasibility of engaging a soccer league in implementing a lay health advisor intervention designed to reduce STD/HIV transmission among Latino men; and
- Assess the feasibility of collecting biomarker data (i.e., urine for chlamydia and gonorrhea testing) from soccer league members, comparing those who have LHAs

and those who do not.

Built on formative research begun by Dr. Rhodes and a team of community and academic partners in 2001 as part of his post-doctoral training at the University of North Carolina, *HoMBReS* has maintained a commitment to CBPR, which has contributed to its success. *HoMBReS* has included members from the Latino communities; representatives of community-based organizations and agencies; healthcare providers; and researchers and practitioners in all aspects of research, including identifying research questions; assessing community strengths, assets, and challenges; defining priorities; developing research and data collection methodologies; collecting and analyzing data; interpreting findings; disseminating of findings; and applying the results to address community concerns through action or intervention.

The main partner organization is Chatham Social Health Council (CSHC), an AIDS service organization in Siler City, NC. Kristen Lindstrom, MPH, is the

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Project Coordinator, Jaime Montañó (center), stands with 2 Navegantes who received their HoMBReS graduation certificates, having completed 16 hours of training to be male lay health advisors.

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Executive Director and Jaime Montaña, originally from Mexico, is a Latino Outreach Coordinator at CSHC and the *HoMBReS* study Project Coordinator.

Based on the social cognitive theory and empowerment education, the *HoMBReS* curriculum builds on and bolsters existing community strengths and assets and affirm positive social norms through “maintaining” wellbeing and healthy relationships. This intervention identified, trained, and currently supports 15 adult Latino male LHAs known as “*Navegantes*” (Navigators), who expand the role of traditional LHAs by serving as: (1) sources of HIV/STD information and referral; (2) opinion leaders to change risky behaviors that may be influenced by norms and expectations about masculinity; and (3) community advocates to work with organizations such as the local public health department to better address the needs and priorities of Latino men in culturally-relevant and gender-appropriate ways. Nominated by their teammates, *Navegantes* attended 16 hours of training that included:

- The magnitude of STD and HIV epidemics in general and among Latinos and farmworkers in the US and NC in particular;

- Types of infections, modes of transmission, signs and symptoms, and local counseling, testing, and treatment options;

- Hands-on condom use skills;

- Understanding hegemonic notions of masculinity as mutable barriers to sexual risk reduction;

- How to mobilize and organize for community change to ensure increased access to, and use of, healthcare services for Latino men.

One training activity is called: “Condom Use in the Dark” requires each *Navegante* to put a condom on a penis model that is obscured from his view. Other trainees watch the process and can see how well the *Navegante* does. This activity reduces tension about condoms and allows *Navegantes* to have fun, master this skill, and practice how they would teach condom use skills to their teammates. Another activity focuses on traditional notions of masculinity and how *Navegantes* can reframe negative statements and bolster positive statements about what it means to be a man.

Currently, each *Navegante* is working with his soccer team of 20-24 teammates. Data collected include process data to document what the *Navegantes* do as well as pre- and post-intervention assessment data to examine outcomes and evaluate the intervention. The final wave of data collection will be collected in Fall 2006.

For more information about this study, please contact: Dr. Rhodes at SRhodes@WFUBMC.Edu.

President's Column

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are indeed fortunate to have someone with Lloyd's background and experience to be assuming the leadership of APTR.

These past two years as your President have indeed been busy and gratifying. I want to convey my appreciation to those who served on the Executive Committee during these past two years: Nana Bennett, Barb Calkins, Suzanne Cashman, Connie Church, Lynn Eckhert, Allison Lewis, Paula Marantz, Kent Nordvig, and Lloyd Novick. I also would like to express my appreciation to the members of the Board who helped guide some of the important decisions that we made during my term in office. Finally, I would not have been able to have served you without the dedication, leadership, and spirit of collaboration that prevails in the members of the APTR staff in Washington. They are a terrific group, and I am indeed indebted to them for the help they have provided during my two years as your President.