

**PROJECT TITLE**

**FIELD REPORT [Date]**



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Executive Summary

1. Introduction
2. Fieldwork Team
3. Aims and Objectives
4. Fieldwork Design
5. Recommendations

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Office for Public Health Excellence at the Institute for Clinical Excellence developed a draft protocol on intensifying HIV testing among college students in the United States. The Center for Sexual Health and HIV Research, in partnership with some universities, had been commissioned to test the applicability of the draft protocol among those involved with the HIV testing for college students.

**Fieldwork Design**

The approach used involved qualitative interviews and participative group discussions. The qualitative work took place in New York, California, and Tennessee. The following took place:

* 10 participative group discussions with a total of 80 respondents
* 40 telephone interviews

**Recommendations**

* Promote HIV testing
* Plan Services
* Provide more training about sexual health

**Barriers to Implementing the Protocol**

* The state of change in the National Health System
* The burden of implementation of the protocol
* The financial implications of the protocol

**Suggestions for the Improvement of the Protocol**

* Better contextualization of the protocol
* Making the document more pleasing to read
* More integration of the community engagement approach
* Provision of toolkits
* Better links into existing initiatives

**Conclusions**

The respondents in this field research acknowledged and welcomed the protocol on intensifying HIV testing. There was a strong divergence of views with regard to how the protocol should be implemented.

**INTRODUCTION**

The Health Department asked the Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to create a public health protocol on intensifying HIV testing to prevent HIV transmission and reduce undiagnosed infection among college students.

The protocol is for the National Health Service and other practitioners who have a direct role in increasing HIV testing among college students. This report shows the key findings related to the fieldwork to test the draft protocol.

**FIELDWORK TEAM**

This report is a collaboration between the Research Department of Infection and Population health and several universities in the US.

The Office for Sexual Health and HIV Research, particularly in the Department of Infection and Population Health delivers high-quality training in and research on sexual health focusing on students in universities.

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

This fieldwork aims:

1. To assess the relevance, acceptability, implementation, and usability of the protocol
2. To take into consideration the views of those working in the field of health and wellness in relation to the following:
3. The potential consequences of the protocol
4. The potential impact of the protocol on a current service provision, policy, or practice
5. The relative priority of each mentioned recommendation
6. The relevance and usefulness of the protocol to current work and practice

**FIELDWORK DESIGN**

The methods used in this fieldwork were generally qualitative in nature. The approach was implemented to allow for a detailed exploration of the individual’s views and experiences. Qualitative methods aim to define the range of emergent issues and examine their linkages.

Respondents were purposely sampled to reflect the range of groups working with university students and their efforts to tackle HIV in universities. In-depth interviews were conducted via phone due to time and financial constraints.

1. **Recruitment and Selection of Participants**

The team aimed to recruit 50 participants. To recruit, the team developed a sampling frame of key individuals in the involved universities. This was done by contacting organizations for information regarding relevant personnel and contacting those who were working in the field.

1. **Interview and Group Discussions**

The interview guide was developed by the team. It was slightly amended following the original focus group discussion to clarify certain topics. Trained researchers, with experience in conducting participatory research, conducted all of the interviews and focus group discussions.

All the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim and were sent to the respondents for them to check their accuracy.

1. **Analysis of Qualitative Material**

This report is based on the issues arising from the interpretation of the qualitative data from the group discussions and interviews. The analysis was done using thematic analysis. Debriefings were done after each workshop to identify the areas that needed further exploration in the research.

1. **Report Outline**

The results of this research are presented in relation to the mentioned recommendation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Promote HIV testing**

Many respondents were very welcoming of the idea of moving toward opt-out HIV testing as the best approach to further the cause. There was still skepticism among other respondents who said that specific training in sexual health awareness was unfeasible. But overall, there was strong support for the inclusion of health promotion with an emphasis on avoiding the stigmatization of college students.

1. **Plan Services**

Most respondents agree that this was a usable recommendation, one with a high feasibility. It is recommended though to conduct a needs assessment if relevant public staff were not available.

1. **Provide More Training on Sexual Health**

Many respondents felt that this was an important recommendation and that the protocol can only be implemented by investing more in training. However, issues regarding the high training burden make it unfeasible.