The Well Project Unplugged: Let’s Talk About Women and HIV

Tuesday, March 10, 2020  |  12:30 PM - 2:00 PM ET

Featuring several members of The Well Project’s Community Advisory Board
Gina Brown, MSW, Ciarra Covin, Porchia Dees, Arianna Lint, Maria Mejia, Bose Olotu, and Wanona Thomas
And moderated by Krista Martel, Executive Director, The Well Project

Visit www.thewellproject.org for a link to register
Agenda

- Introduction
- Survey highlights and personal experiences
  - Stigma (in healthcare and other settings)
  - Self-stigma
  - Concurrent health conditions
  - Barriers to accessing mental healthcare
  - Self-care
  - U-U
- Q&A
About The Well Project

- Non-profit organization with a mission to change the course of the HIV/AIDS pandemic through a unique and comprehensive focus on women and girls
- Leverages technology to improve health outcomes and increase quality of life for women and girls living with HIV
- Our focus: education and information, community support, advocacy and leadership, collaborative engagement, and women-focused HIV research
- Access our resources and join our community at www.thewellproject.org
About WATCH!

- **WATCH!** (Women’s Advocacy and Treatment Coalition on HIV) is an ongoing HIV treatment advocacy and capacity-building webinar series.
- The **WATCH! 2020 series** will take place throughout the year and will include 3 webinars.
- Webinars will be recorded and can be accessed on our website and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com) after they take place.
  - Webinar will last approximately 90 minutes with Q&A at the end; use live chat box to communicate with other participants and panelists and Q&A to pose questions.
  - [Click here](https://example.com) to access a list of previous webinars.
March 10 is National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (#NWGHAAD), an annual nationwide observance that sheds light on the impact that HIV has on women and girls.

Supported by the Office of Women’s Health (OWH), NWGHAAD encourages federal, national, and community organizations to come together to increase awareness, offer support and share information about the importance of HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment.

For events near you and to find more ways to join in the efforts to share knowledge and take action in your community, visit: www.womenshealth.gov/nwghaad
The Well Project’s Survey

- **Together We Are...Making an Impact**: survey on women’s experiences living with HIV and The Well Project’s impact on their lives
- Shows that women living with HIV have made significant progress in some areas, continue to face numerous obstacles
- Demonstrates our unique resources are having positive impact on many challenges women face
- Latest in series of surveys to ensure we are maximizing effectiveness, strengthening impact of programming

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Poll Question

Have you experienced HIV stigma in your personal life? If yes, choose all that apply.

- From family members
- From friends
- In my neighborhood
- At my work
- With a romantic partner
- Other
- N/A

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STIGMA IN THE PERSONAL LIVES OF WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV

69% (n=104) of women living with HIV reported experiencing HIV stigma or discrimination in their personal lives.

- 50% From family members
- 49% From friends
- 41% In their neighborhoods
- 42% At their places of employment
- 39% With romantic partners
- 22% In online forums/chats/groups
- 19% At places of worship
- 16% At HIV service organizations
- 14% At school
- 11% In detention, jail or prison

Have you experienced HIV stigma in a healthcare setting?

- Yes
- No
- I don’t recall
- N/A

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STIGMA EXPERIENCED IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS BY WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV

61% of women living with HIV reported personally experiencing stigma in a healthcare setting.

- 38% Registered nurses and Nurse practitioners
- 35% Healthcare staff
- 32% Emergency department physicians
- 30% Dentists
- 28% Physician assistant/ Nursing assistant
- 25% Primary-care physicians
- 19% OB/GYNs
- 19% Community health/ Clinic worker
- 16% Social workers
- 12% Case manager
- 8% Home healthcare worker

Poll Question

Have you experienced HIV self-stigma?
Yes, I have in the past
Yes, I still experience it today
No, I have not experienced self-stigma
Not sure
N/A
"I devalue myself frequently. Growing up HIV positive I didn’t have a foundation of self worth/value before HIV and growing up HIV positive it became hard to resist the external stigma."

"I felt] shamed because I thought that people would think that I was nasty and that I was having sex with anybody. I was scared to hold people’s hands."

"I’ve been undetectable for 20 years, and I still can’t bring myself to have sex. Who would want diseased goods?"

"In conversations I would internalize comments and feel like they were directed towards me, even though no one in the room knew of my status."

"At times I thought I was unworthy of love or sex due to having the virus."
OUTLOOK ON LIVING WITH HIV

When asked to assess The Well Project’s influence on their outlook on living with HIV, women living with HIV responded they were “somewhat” or “much” more likely to:

- 83% Feel hopeful about the future
- 79% Feel valuable as a person
- 76% Feel a sense of emotional well being
- 74% Experience less HIV self-stigma
- 72% Experience less HIV stigma from others
- 70% Feel comfortable disclosing my HIV status to others
- 64% Feel less isolated due to my HIV status

65% of women living with HIV indicated they experience other serious health conditions, in addition to HIV.
Poll Question

Have you ever experienced barriers to accessing mental healthcare?

Yes
No
I don’t recall
I’ve never tried to access mental healthcare
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Barrier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51%</td>
<td>Financial payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49%</td>
<td>Long wait time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41%</td>
<td>Lack of access to mental health professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39%</td>
<td>Experiencing stigma from mental health professionals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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(of the 40% of women living with HIV who reported encountering challenges to accessing care for their mental health needs)
SELF-CARE

When asked how The Well Project’s resources had affected aspects of self-care related to their emotional well-being, women living with HIV responded they were “somewhat” or “much” more likely to:

- **72%** Eat healthy foods
- **71%** Accept only respectful, caring behavior from partners, family, and/or friends
- **69%** Try to get enough/good rest
- **67%** Seek out care for mental/emotional/behavioral health issues
- **66%** Seek out support for past or current violence or trauma
- **65%** Exercise or move regularly
- **64%** Practice safer sex

Poll Question

What do you do for self-care?

- Make sure to get enough sleep
- Exercise
- Eat healthy foods
- Seek mental health support
- Read or write
- Garden
- Art
- Spend time with friends, family, or partner
- Other
Awareness and Impact of U=U
Women living with HIV respondents reported the following:

**Familiarity with U=U**
- 23% Very familiar
- 5% Somewhat familiar
- 3% Slightly familiar
- 7% Not at all familiar
- 62% Extremely familiar

**Confidence in U=U Message**
(HIV cannot be sexually transmitted with an undetectable viral load)
- 5% Not at all confident
- 18% Very confident
- 13% Somewhat confident
- 4% Slightly confident
- 60% Extremely confident

**U=U’s Positive Impact on Their Lives**
- 20% Significantly
- 13% Moderately
- 6% Slightly
- 9% Not at all
- 52% Tremendously

**Heard about U=U from Healthcare Provider**
- 36% Yes
- 64% No
Poll Question

Has your healthcare provider spoken to you about U=U?

Yes
No
I don’t recall
N/A
EXPERIENCES REPORTED BY WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV RESPONDENTS

Key Issues Facing Women Living with HIV

- 69% experienced stigma in their personal lives and 61% in healthcare settings
- 60% experienced self-stigma
- 56% said mental health issues made it harder to address their HIV-related needs
- 80% said they had experienced some form of violence or trauma
- 65% said they were dealing with comorbidities

Impact of The Well Project’s Resources on Women Living with HIV

- 72% were less likely to experience stigma from others
- 74% were less likely to experience self-stigma
- 67% said they were more likely to seek care for mental health issues
- 66% said they were more likely to seek support for current or past violence or trauma
- 65% increased their knowledge about HIV and aging and other comorbidities

• For information, details, and links to resources:
  – Read the survey!
  – Check out our survey press release

• For more fact sheets and to connect to our community of women living with HIV, visit:
  – www.thewellproject.org
  – www.facebook.com/thewellproject
  – www.twitter.com/thewellproject
  – www.instagram.com/thewellprojecthiv
  – www.youtube.com/thewellprojecthiv
The Q & A will come from the questions submitted to the presenters through the chat box during the webinar session.