

# PrEP-use experience among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (gbMSM)

## *Preliminary results from Engage Montreal*

**Herak Apelian<sup>1</sup>, Marc Messier-Peet<sup>2</sup>, Joseph Cox<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>, Trevor A. Hart<sup>4</sup>, Daniel Grace<sup>5</sup>, David M. Moore<sup>8</sup>, Nathan J. Lachowsky<sup>6</sup>, Jody Jollimore<sup>7</sup>, Heather Armstrong<sup>8</sup>, Gbolahan Olarewaju<sup>8</sup>, Len Tooley<sup>4</sup>, Ricky Rodrigues<sup>4</sup>, Barry Adam<sup>14</sup>, Michel Alary<sup>11</sup>, Martin Blais<sup>9</sup>, Pierre Côté<sup>10</sup>, Jorge Flores-Aranda<sup>15</sup>, Clemon George<sup>12</sup>, Bertrand Lebouché<sup>1</sup>, Ken Monteith<sup>16</sup>, Joanne Otis<sup>9</sup>, Frédéric Pronovost<sup>17</sup>, Bouchra Serhir<sup>18</sup>, Darrell Tan<sup>13</sup>, Réjean Thomas<sup>19</sup>, David Thompson<sup>17</sup>, Cécile Tremblay<sup>20</sup>, Gilles Lambert<sup>2</sup>**

1. McGill University, Montreal, QC, 2. Direction Régionale de Santé Publique de Montréal, Montreal, QC, 3. McGill University Health Centre, Montreal, QC, 4. Ryerson University, Toronto, ON, 5. University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, 6. University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, 7. Community-Based Research Centre for Gay Men's Health, Vancouver, BC, 8. BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS, Vancouver, BC, 9. Université du Québec à Montréal, Montreal, QC, 10. Clinique Médicale du Quartier Latin, Montreal, QC, 11. Centre de Recherche du CHU de Québec, Quebec, QC, 12. University of Ontario Institute of Technology, Oshawa, ON, 13. St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto, ON, 14. Ontario HIV Treatment Network, Toronto, ON, 15. Université de Sherbrooke, Montreal, QC, 16. Coalition des Organismes Communautaires Québécois de Lutte Contre le SIDA, Montreal, QC, 17. RÉZO, Montreal, QC, 18. Institut National de Santé Publique, Montreal, QC, 19. Clinique L'Actuel, Montreal, QC, 20. Centre de Recherches du CHUM, Montreal, QC

## Conflict of Interest Disclosure

In the past 2 years I have been an employee of: **N/A**

In the past 2 years I have been a consultant for: **N/A**

In the past 2 years I have held investments in the following pharmaceutical organizations, medical devices companies or communications firms: **N/A**

In the past 2 years I have been a member of the Scientific advisory board for: **N/A**

In the past 2 years I have been a speaker for: **N/A**

In the past 2 years I have received research support (grants) from: **N/A**

In the past 2 years I have received honoraria from: **N/A**

I agree to disclose approved and non-approved indications for medications in this presentation: **YES**

I agree to use generic names of medications in this presentation: **YES**

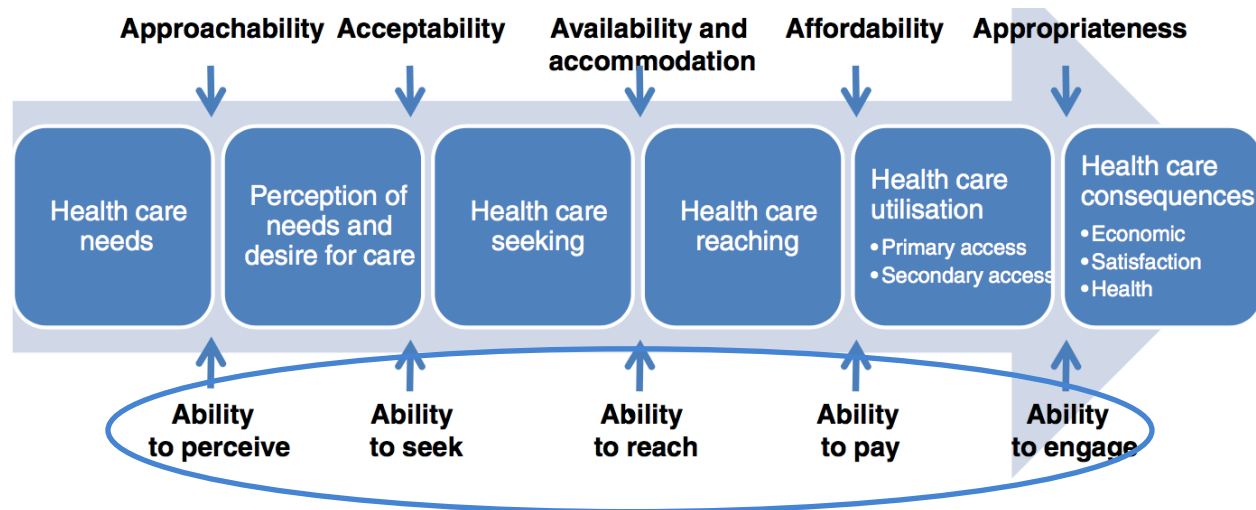
There are relationships to disclose: **NO**

I would like to acknowledge  
that we are gathered on  
the traditional, ancestral, and unceded Indigenous territories  
of the Coast Salish Peoples  
particularly the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.

# Background

- Quebec was the first Canadian province to have clear PrEP guidelines in 2013
- The impact of PrEP on the reduction of HIV incidence is contingent on its uptake
- In order to evaluate access to PrEP it is important to understand determinants that influence access and identify potential barriers and facilitators

# Levesque's model of access to healthcare

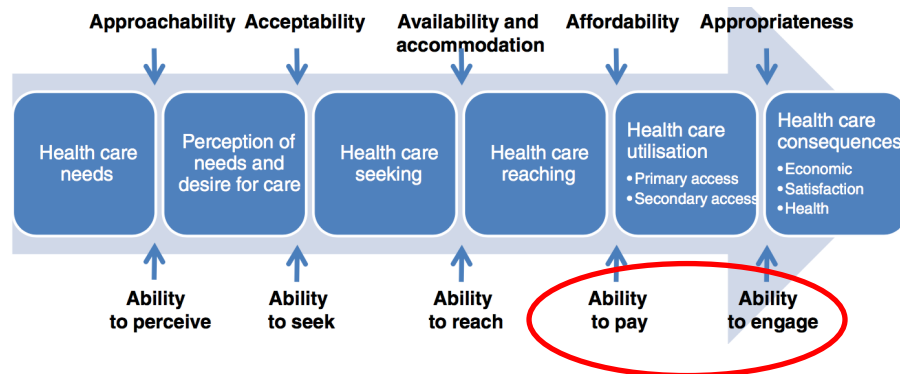


# The Engage Study

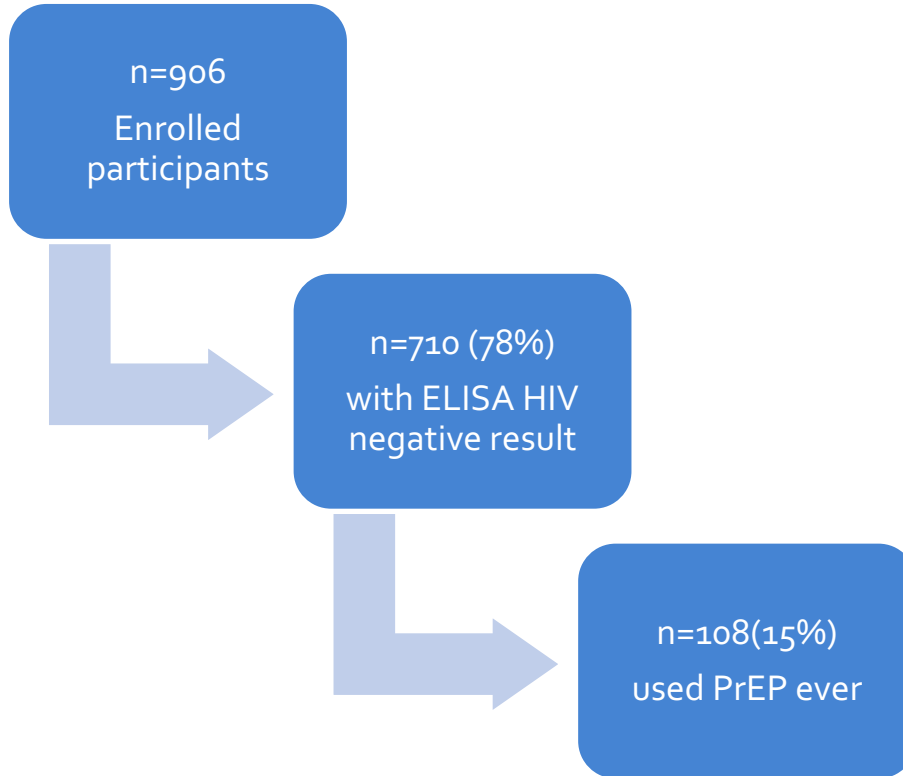
- Engage is a cross-sectional study being conducted in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver
  - To assess individual, social and community-level factors associated with HIV/STI incidence and prevention
- **Respondent Driven Sampling** was used to recruit cisgender and transgender men
  - 16 years or older
  - Reported having sex with another man in the past 6 months
- Participants complete a computer-assisted self-interview and undergo HIV/STI testing

**Objectives:** Among participants who reported ever using PrEP:

- I. Provide a descriptive profile
- II. Describe their experience
- III. Explore the last 2 steps of access to PrEP



# Results





# I. Profile of ever-PrEP takers

	Never taken PrEP (n=602) %	Taken PrEP (ever) (n=108) %
<b>Sociodemographic characteristics</b>		
Age: 30 years and older	62	71
Sexual orientation: Gay	79	84
Ethnicity: French Canadian	50	47
Education: University*	46	60
Income: Less than 30K	56	47

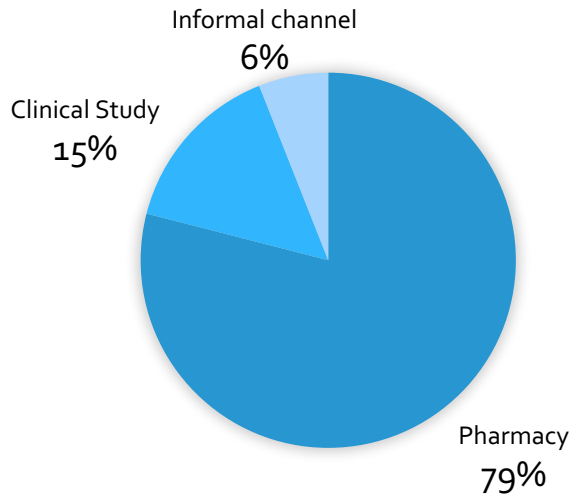
	Never taken PrEP (n=602) %	Taken PrEP (ever) (n=108) %
<b>Access to healthcare services</b>		
Has a primary healthcare provider*	60	74
Has medical insurance*	70	86
<b>Behavioural risk factors</b>		
Met Canadian PrEP guideline recommendations* <sup>1</sup>	50	92
->Condomless anal sex at least once (P6M)*	60	93
->Diagnosed with a bacterial STI (last year)*	14	47
->HIRI $\geq 11$ *	65	91
-> Use of nPEP (more than once)*	2	27

\* Significance test: Pearson's chi-square test; p-value<0.05

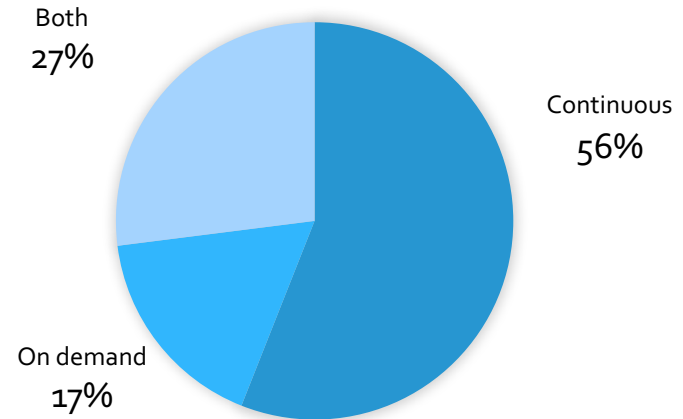
<sup>1</sup> Tan D. et al, 2017

## II. Experience of ever-PrEP takers

SOURCE OF MOST RECENT PREP COURSE (n=108)

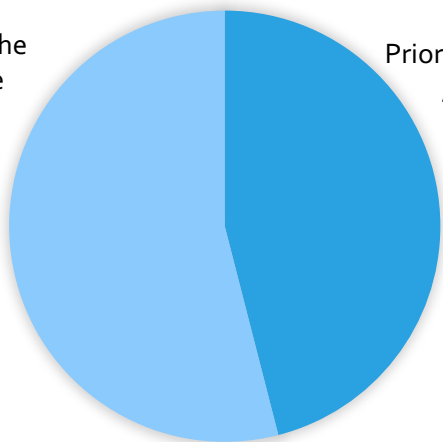


PREP REGIMEN (n=108)



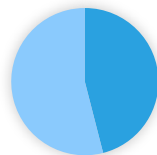
## CURRENT VS. PRIOR PREP USE (n=108)

On PrEP at the  
time of the  
study  
54%



Prior PrEP use  
46%

On PrEP  
at the  
time of  
the  
study



Prior  
PrEP use

### Year of first PrEP use (n=108)

≤ 2014	9%
2015	19%
2016	31%
2017	40%
2018	2%

### Year of last PrEP use (n=50)

≤ 2014	10%
2015	4%
2016	22%
2017	59%
2018	6%

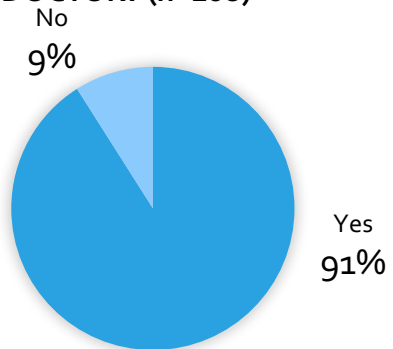
Prior  
PrEP use

# III. Ability to Pay

Participants who agreed or strongly agreed with the following statement (n=108)

I have not sought a prescription for PrEP in the past because of the cost of the medication	37%
---	-----

MOST RECENT PREP PRESCRIBED BY A DOCTOR? (n=108)



Cost of prescribed PrEP for one month (n=98)

0\$	35%
Less than 25\$	7%
25\$ to 149\$	41%
150\$ to 299\$	9%
300\$ to 899\$	3%

# Ability to engage

## 1. Potential obstacles

### Participants who agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements (n=108)

I am worried about the short- and long-term side effects of taking PrEP	52%
I don't like the idea of being required to go to the regular medical follow-up visits involved in taking PrEP	16%
I would have difficulty taking PrEP medication everyday	23%
PrEP is well perceived in the community	43%

## 2. Interaction with the healthcare provider

PrEP-use experience among those who had their last course of PrEP prescribed by a doctor (n=98)

Received the first prescription of PrEP at a medical clinic specialized in sexual health	78%
Had the opportunity to ask questions or raise concerns about taking PrEP with the healthcare professional	92%
Did not feel the need to convince the healthcare professional to prescribe PrEP for the first time	74%

### 3. Overall satisfaction

#### Overall satisfaction with experience taking PrEP (n=108)

Very satisfied	49%
Moderately satisfied	41%
A little satisfied	7%
Not at all satisfied	3%



# Limitations

- Measurement
- Representativity
- Sample size

# Conclusion

- Most met Canadian PrEP guideline recommendations
- Some users may have precarious access to PrEP
- Most paid less than 150\$ per month
- Potential obstacles might limit ongoing use of PrEP
- Most accessed PrEP through a specialized clinic
- Most are satisfied with their overall experience using PrEP

# Next Steps

- Explore for facilitators and barriers of PrEP-use with our full sample while adjusting for other covariates
- Explore for factors associated with previous PrEP-use compared to current PrEP-use

# Acknowledgements

## Engage Participants

## Community and Public Health Partners

- AIDS Committee of Toronto
- AIDS Community Care Montreal
- Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention
- Asian Community AIDS Service
- Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention
- British Columbia Centre for Disease Control
- BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS
- Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal
- CIUSSS – Quebec
- Community Based Research Centre for Gay Men's Health
- Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance

- Hassle Free Clinic - Toronto
- Health Initiative for Men
- HIV Prevention Lab - Toronto
- Maison Plein Coeur
- Research Institute McGill University Health Centre
- Positive Living Society of British Columbia
- REZO – Montreal
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- YouthCO HIV and Hep C Society

## Academic Partners

- Ryerson University
- McGill University
- University of Toronto
- Simon Fraser University
- University of Victoria

- University of British Columbia
- University of Windsor
- St. Michael's Hospital

## Our Funders

- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- CIHR Canadian HIV Trials Network
- Canadian Foundation for AIDS Research
- Canadian Blood Services
- Ontario HIV Treatment Network
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- National Institute of Health

	Taken PrEP (ever) (n=108)	Never taken PrEP (n=602)
<b>Access to healthcare services</b>		
Has a primary healthcare provider	74%	60%
Has medical insurance	86%	70%
<b>Sexual Behaviour</b>		
Number of partners (P6M): 6 or more	85%	45%
Condomless anal sex at least once (P6M)	93%	60%
Attended a bathhouse (P6M)	56%	35%
Attended a group sex event (P6M)	38%	20%

	Taken PrEP (ever) (n=108)	Never taken PrEP (n=602)
<b>Substance Use (P6M)</b>		
Cocaine	33%	25%
Methamphetamine (crystal meth or speed)	23%	15%
Poppers	55%	24%
<b>Other characteristics</b>		
Diagnosed with an STI (last year)	56%	22%
Eligible for PrEP according to the Canadian guidelines	92%	50%