

## **TESTING THE TESTERS**

How Mystery Shoppers can Improve HIV Prevention Services

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**WHAT** IS IT?

professional anonymously visits a retail store, restaurant, or bank with the goal of evaluating the quality of costumer experience.



WHY DOES IT MATTER? However, this strategy is **not common** in healthcare settings, like clinics offering HIV counseling, testing, and referral (CTR) services.

Mystery shopping is a process where a trained

Yet present quality assurance (QA) strategies offer a limited understanding of how YMSM clients experience when they visit a clinic for CTR services.

Previous research has demonstrated that young men who have

prevention strategies, like HIV testing or PrEP, when CTR services

sex with men (YMSM) may be motivated to engage in HIV

are high-quality and tailored to their needs and challenges.

## conduct mystery shopper visits and systematically assess the quality of services

at 66 HIV testing sites in Philadelphia, Atlanta, and Houston. Below is a diagram explaining the process:

THE STUDY

In 201X, the [name of study] research team recruited and trained 24 YMSM to



appointments for free, rapid HIV testing



person methods



strategies, in addition to HIV and PrEP basics



comments relative to other sites in the same city **ASSESSMENT** 



using a mobile phone or desktop The self-assessment had questions about different aspects of HIV testing experiences like:

Clinic Environment



**BREAKDOWN** 

• Provider's ability to talk about relationships, safer sex, and PrEP

Philadelphia:

Participants generally agreed that among

participating sites in Atlanta, Houston, and

• Visibility of LGBTQ+ imagery

Privacy and Confidentiality

**DIVING** INTO THE **RESULTS** 

> 84% 71% 63%



**57%** 

used medical

forms inclusive of

sexual and gender

minorities

all visits:

privacy and confidentiality

maintained their

competent interacting with sexual minorities 49%

had providers that

were comfortable and



had visible LGBTQ

symbols and printed

materials, like rainbow

discussed YMSM's relationships in context of their results

49%

DEEPER

58% provided PrEP information and counseling

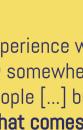
I feel like my experience was the typical experience of going somewhere where they see a lot of gay people [...] but lack a real understanding of what comes with the lifestyle. You are not really sure if it goes past the pay check or if they are there [...] because they are

56%

provided **risk** 

reduction counseling,

such as X



passionate.

24%

offered safer sex

education like X

and Y



A TALE

Agencies in Atlanta tended to rate higher than those in Houston and Philadelphia when it came to: **Clinic Environments** 

Researchers also found significant differences

across agencies in the three cities, highlighting

how HIV testing services vary region by region.



80

60

**Medical Form Inclusivity** with Atlanta rating about 20% higher

**ATLANTA** 

**PHILIDELPHIA** 



100

80

60

40

20 -

0

HOUSTON

**ATLANTA** 

**PHILIDELPHIA** 

between each city's average scores for: PrEP Information and **Counseling** with Philadelphia rating between 10 and 23% higher

## **TAKING ACTION**

key take aways/next steps

ITEM 3