Abstract

Trials of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) show that it is highly effective in preventing HIV, but to have a meaningful impact on the HIV epidemic, its utilization needs to be scaled up. Engaging primary care providers (PCPs) is a key path to that solution. The goal of this project is to characterize what PCPs practicing in Fulton County, GA currently do to promote PrEP for patients at greatest risk of acquiring HIV (e.g., young, black men who have sex with men [YBMSM]) and to assess their perceived needs for improving PrEP promotion. A special emphasis will be placed on PCPs’ use of their electronic medical records (EMR) systems to assist in keeping patients with an indication for PrEP adherent to and retained in care. The purpose of this characterization is to give Dr. Chamberlain, an investigator experienced with provider-focused interventions but new to HIV, pilot data on what PCP-focused interventions to enhance PrEP promotion are needed most. These interventions will ultimately comprise a key element in future R-level grant applications aimed at developing and testing the AFIX program, supplemented by EMR-based interventions, for PrEP promotion (Figure 1).

Figure 1. AFIX model for vaccine promotion: a model worth exploring for HIV prevention

The AFIX program is an immunization-focused quality improvement program developed in Georgia and adopted by the CDC due to its success. Its goal is to increase pediatric vaccination rates by improving immunization delivery practices of providers. This national program involves collaboration between health departments and private providers. It consists of four stages: assessment of vaccination rates, feedback on adoption of 18 potential rate-improvement interventions (e.g., standing order programs, vaccine champions), provision of non-monetary incentives (e.g. awards) to motivate providers, and exchange of vaccination rates among peer practices. Given its success in vaccine promotion, Dr. Chamberlain is eager to explore its utility for PrEP promotion, with the addition of PrEP-specific EMR enhancements.