

Providence/Boston Center for AIDS Research



IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE/HIV SCIENTIFIC WORKING GROUP



Trisha Arnold, PhD

Co-Leader

Clinical Psychologist, Research Scientist
Rhode Island Hospital, Brown University



Rebecca Rudel, DrPH, MPH, RD

Co-Leader

Assistant Professor, Section of Infectious
Diseases, Boston University

The mission of this Scientific Working Group is to increase implementation science HIV related projects. We offer resources (mentoring, consultations, education) on how to incorporate implementation science into HIV related projects. This group is co-led by Trisha Arnold, Ph.D., a Research Scientist at Rhode Island Hospital and Assistant Professor of Research in the Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior (DPHB) at Brown University, and Rebecca Rudel, DrPH, RD, an Assistant Professor in the Section of Infectious Diseases at the Chobanian and Avedisian School of Medicine at Boston University, and a Fellow at the Boston University Evans Center for Implementation and Improvement Sciences (CIIS).

This group is inviting new members. If you are interested in being involved you can email Dr. Arnold at trisha_arnold@brown.edu or Dr. Rudel at rrudel@bu.edu

For more information on our first meeting, please see "Upcoming Events and Updates" below.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND UPDATES

January 29, 2025
10:00 AM

Prov/Bos CFAR HIV

If you are interested in attending, please RSVP below, and we will send you the zoom link on **January 20th.**

Implementation Science SWG: First Educational Zoom

'Advancing HIV Research Using
Implementation Science: Introducing the
IS/HIV CFAR Scientific Working Group'

[RSVP Here](#)

February 13 & 14, 2025

2025 Federal Proposal Development Workshop

Applications accepted on a rolling basis,
with a final deadline of **January 31**.

Your spot will be confirmed no later
than **February 3**.

See [website](#) for more details.

Presented by the Atkisson Training Group

ATG

Peg Atkisson, PhD
Founder/President

Amanda Welch, PhD
Proposal Development
Lead/Consultant

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

**2025 Federal Proposal
Development Workshop**

February 13 & 14 | 4 sessions

BROWN Division of Research
PROV | BUS
CFAR
School of Public Health

[Apply to Attend Here](#)

March 12-14, 2025

BRIDGE Implementation Science Boot Camp

Through this 3-day Implementation
Science Bootcamp, attendees will learn
the skills and tools needed to increase the
adoption of evidence-based practices,
treatments, and interventions in clinical
and community-based settings.

**Located at South Street Landing in
Providence, RI**



Brown Research on Implementation and
Dissemination to Guide Evidence Use

[Click Here for More
Information](#)

**Wednesday, February 26, 2025
11AM-12PM ET**

SHARE Program: Innovations in Translational Behavioral Science to Improve Self-Management of HIV and Alcohol Reaching Emerging Adults

Join us to hear [Drs. Sylvie Naar](#) and
[Karen MacDonell](#) present progress and
emerging results from the [Self-
Management of HIV and Alcohol Reaching
Emerging Adults \(SHARE\) P01](#) program.



Uganda Russia Boston Alcohol Network for
Alcohol Research Collaboration on HIV/AIDS

[Register Here](#)

First Overdose Prevention Center in the United States Set to Open in Providence, RI

The first state-sanctioned overdose prevention center (OPC) in the United States will soon open in Providence, Rhode Island, marking a pivotal moment in the nation's efforts to address the overdose crisis. Managed by Project Weber/RENEW, this innovative facility will offer a safe, supervised space where individuals can use pre-obtained substances with immediate medical intervention in case of overdose.



Brown University researchers, led by epidemiologist [Brandon Marshall](#), are conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the center's impact on both individual health outcomes and community well-being. This study will examine how the OPC influences overdose rates, access to addiction treatment, and local public health, offering critical data to guide future policy decisions.

[Read More Here](#)

SAVE THE DATE

2025 Annual CFAR Research Forum

Where: Boston University, Photonics Colloquium Room

When: Friday, May 9, 2025

8:30 AM - 4:00PM

More information to come.

Announcing the First Annual Providence/Boston CFAR Research Awards

These awards will highlight the outstanding contributions from early-stage investigators and those new to HIV research who have utilized CFAR services in support of their research.

Eligibility:

- Must have a faculty appointment at Boston University, Boston Medical Center, Brown University, or Brown University Health
- Utilized CFAR services in the conduct of your research and/or CFAR Developmental Award recipient within the last five years
- Not yet received an R01 or equivalent award at the time CFAR services/funding were utilized

Applications are due no later than February 7, 2025

Research Award winners will be expected to present at the upcoming Annual CFAR Research Forum being held on May 9, 2025

Award amounts will range from \$500 to \$1,000

[Click Here to Apply](#)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Spring 2025 Prov/Bos CFAR Developmental Grants Program

Request for applications

For more detailed information, please visit our [website](#).

**LOI are due by 5:00PM EST on
Sunday, February 9, 2025**

**Full applications are due by 5:00pm
EST on Sunday, April 6, 2025**

▶ **Letters of Intent** are required and due no later than 5:00pm EST on **Sunday, February 9, 2025**

▶ LOIs must be submitted online by clicking [here](#)

▶ Notification of LOI's selected for full submission will be announced **February 14, 2025**

▶ For those with accepted LOIs, full applications are due by 5:00pm EST on **Sunday, April 6, 2025**

[Submit LOI Here](#)



CCERC AWARDS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGED RESEARCH

The Providence/Boston CFAR-CCERC is thrilled to announce the winners of the annual **CCERC 2024 Community Engagement Awards**. The CCERC is incredibly grateful for our award winners whose hard work and commitment to Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) excellence motivates us to continue our commitment to best practices in HIV research and community engagement.

The CCERC proudly announces the 2024 awardees:



Recipient
Samantha Johnson
Senior Manager,
Prevention and
Navigation Public

CCERC Community Member Award

Recognizes significant contributions in advocacy, healthcare provision, and community activism in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

[Samantha Johnson](#) has served as a key member in many important projects at Boston Medical Center, including projects related to an outbreak of new HIV infections in persons with active substance use disorder, launching COVID-19 laboratory surveillance during the pandemic emergency, and an electronic medical record feature designed to augment hepatitis C and HIV screening in the ambulatory and

Health Programs
Project Trust & STD
Clinic
Section of Infectious
Diseases
Boston Medical Center

emergency department settings of BMC. Sam's contributions to HIV prevention clinical services and research often go unheralded, but they are numerous and incredibly impactful. Sam began as a Health Educator at BMC in 2014 before taking on leadership roles first at Project TRUST, BMC's drop-in harm reduction program, and is now overseeing the operations of

the Boston Medical Center STI clinic and Project TRUST. Sam oversees the team at BMC directly responsible for HIV prevention among people who are at risk for acquisition of HIV through sex, injection drug use, or both, many of whom are extremely marginalized and face barriers to engaging in care.

In her role, Sam has achieved a number of important accomplishments related to HIV prevention:

First, she has led the transformation of Project TRUST from just an HIV testing site to a full-service harm reduction program that offers not only HIV testing and condoms but also a full spectrum of services for people who use drugs, including sterile injection equipment, safer smoking supplies, fentanyl test strips, and low-barrier clinical services such as HIV treatment and PrEP.

Second, she has helped to develop and/or expand harm reduction programs at BMC by facilitating the distribution of harm reduction equipment in the HIV clinic, BMC Emergency Department, and Observation Unit—programs that are critical for delivering evidence-based services and building trust in the healthcare system among people who use drugs.

Third, in her leadership roles, she has trained, supervised, inspired, and helped to professionally develop scores of staff, many of whom have been promoted, pursued additional training (e.g., public health, nursing, and administration), but remain committed to the struggle to prevent HIV and improve the lives of those affected by it.

Fourth, though under-recognized, Sam has made incredible contributions to research on substance use and HIV prevention. Sam has facilitated research participation for Project TRUST clients, always with a keen eye toward ensuring participant safety, dignity, and the integrity of program operations. These research studies include multiple studies directly related to HIV and HIV prevention, such as qualitative NIDA- and CFAR-funded studies on PrEP among people who use drugs, and a ViiV-funded study on low-barrier access to long-acting injectable HIV treatment with rilpivirine/cabotegravir. Other studies focus on racial inequalities in overdose, experiences with care following serious injection-related infections, and harm reduction services in the hospital. In her role, she helped implement a formal review process for proposed research studies at Project TRUST, which included input from Project TRUST staff. Sam's fierce commitment is to protect the integrity of the program and the dignity of the clients in all proposed research. Furthermore, she often provides clear and helpful critiques of proposed studies, which improve the operations, implementation, research approach, and generalizability of the findings.

As a member of the Community Engaged Research Council of the Providence/Boston CFAR, she also brings these on-the-ground perspectives to the broader research community.



Significant Contribution Award

Awarded for outstanding research that improves HIV prevention, treatment, care, or cure efforts.

Project Name: Launching a geriatrics and HIV-ID integrated clinic to improve care for people aging with HIV: The HIVE program.

Recipient

Archana Asundi, MD

Assistant Professor of
Medicine
Director, Clinical
Research Unit
Section of Infectious
Disease
Boston University
Chobanian &
Avedisian School of
Medicine

[Dr. Archana Asundi](#) is an assistant professor of medicine at Boston University School of Medicine, and a physician-scientist and infectious disease clinician at Boston Medical Center. She specializes in the care of people living with HIV through her clinical practice at BMC, with a specific focus on HIV and aging. Her individual research program focuses on topics related to HIV, aging, and age-related comorbidities. She is the director of the HIV-Endurance (HIVE) clinic, funded by an HRSA SPNS grant, of which she is the principal investigator. In her role as Director of the Infectious Disease Clinical Research Unit (ID-CRU) at BMC, she also supports and oversees the conduct of a large portfolio of clinical trials and clinical-

translational research studies in the Center for Infectious Disease (CID).

Project Overview: The HIV-Endurance (HIVE) clinic at Boston Medical Center is an integrated geriatrics-infectious disease consultation clinic for people aging with HIV. As part of a HRSA Special Projects of National Significance grant award, the HIVE clinic's mission is to address the unique care needs of people with HIV (PWH) aged 50 and older. HIVE operates as a monthly pop-up clinic in the familiar ID clinic space where PWH receive primary care. During their visits, persons referred to the HIVE clinic engage with a multidisciplinary team, including an ID clinician, pharmacist, geriatrician, geriatric nurse, and medical case manager, for a comprehensive assessment of their medical and social needs. A person's health priorities and assessments are used to develop a care plan that meets their needs and goals, which includes referrals to beneficial services in the community. The work done by the HIVE clinic at BMC supports the holistic care of PWH to optimize their health and quality of life, ensuring they feel supported and empowered in their health and lives as they grow older.

Funder: This project was funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) under the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through a Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) Part F: Special Projects of National Significance (SPNS) grant.

Community Partners: The HIVE clinic engaged community partners through the C-CERC, the BMC CID patient advisory council, and patient liaisons from the New York State Department of Health Center for Quality Improvement and Innovation to inform, review, and revise clinic workflow and educational materials. The BMC patient advisory council was instrumental in revising the name of the clinic to HIV-Endurance to better align with the priorities and goals of the project. The HIVE clinic also frequently refers patients to community-based organizations for services, including meal delivery organizations such as Community Servings, adult day health organizations, and senior centers. The HIVE clinic received the *Flame of HIV/AIDS Activism Award* from the Massachusetts Getting to Zero Coalition in December 2024

Vicki Godleski Award

Awarded to those who have used innovative approaches to involve community members in every stage of research, from proposal development to dissemination.



Recipient

Dr. Kaku So-Armah
Associate Professor of
Medicine
Boston University
Chobanian & Avedisian
School of Medicine
Director,
Providence/Boston
CFAR Diversity, Equity,
Inclusion and
Accessibility Program

**Long HAUL CARE (Longitudinal HIV Assets
for Underrepresented Learners – Community Approach
to Research Engagement)**

[Dr. Kaku So-Armah](#) is an epidemiologist with expertise in cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses of cohort studies and use of electronic health record data for research. His lab uses molecular biology combined with data on health behaviors, risk factors, and disease diagnoses to identify and explain novel epidemiological associations and identify novel intervention targets. His research focuses on substance use and chronic infections like human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and tuberculosis (TB) and how these exposures impact the heart, liver and lungs.

This work is not yet funded.

Brief overview of Project: The purpose of this revision is to expand the scope of Providence/Boston CFAR Developmental Core to increase the depth of HIV knowledge and vision of self as scientist (scientific human capital), culturally aware mentoring networks (scientific social capital), and access to HIV pilot funding (scientific financial capital) of learners from high school to early-stage or new-to-HIV faculty.

Kaku's innovative approaches to include community members and community organizations in his research has fostered amazing partnerships between community members, Colleges and Universities, Youth Employment Initiatives, Youth in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) programs, and after school programs. His work is a powerful effort to catalyze community-based participatory research (CBPR) among early stage faculty or those new to HIV research, as well as youth who may be interested in a research career.

Kaku's fierce advocacy ensures that future leaders in the research and scientific world will bring new opportunities to minorities and disenfranchised populations, creating more equitable opportunities and a seat at the community table.



Recipient

Arryn A. Guy, PhD
Licensed Clinical
Psychologist
Assistant Professor of
Psychology

Innovators Award

Recognizes groundbreaking approaches in community engagement through research.

Community Research Affirming Femmes of Trans Experience (CRAFT)

[Dr. Arryn Guy](#) (she/they) is a former investigator in the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences at the Brown University School of Public Health. She was also the PI of a NIDA-funded K99/R00 to adapt and test an acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT)-based, gender-affirming stigma

Illinois Institute of
Technology
Former Investigator in
the Department of
Behavioral and Social
Science
Brown University
School of Public Health

intervention that targets substance misuse and HIV risk among trans adults. Dr. Guy's work focuses on community-based participatory research with queer and trans communities to develop and implement evidence-based behavioral health interventions. Dr. Guy has recently started a new position at the Illinois Institute of Technology where she is an Assistant Professor of Psychology.

This study employed a cross-sectional online survey design to explore behavioral and psychosocial factors associated with problematic alcohol use and recovery outcomes among trans women of color across the United States. The survey assessed a range of variables, including: 1) Current and past alcohol use, perceptions of problem drinking, pre-recovery problem severity, and factors influencing changes in alcohol use (e.g., experiences in Alcoholics Anonymous or treatment programs, other change processes, and strategies) as well as factors related to recovery maintenance; 2) Perceptions of normative drinking behaviors within the community, focusing on descriptive and injunctive norms; 3) Experiences of stigma, structural vulnerabilities, psychological distress, and HIV risk behaviors.

The study design and procedures, including the survey, measures, recruitment materials, informed consent process, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination, were co-created over the course of one year through approximately 20 meetings with our Community Advisory Board (CAB). The CAB comprised five Black, Indigenous, Latina, and Asian transgender women and transfeminine individuals with lived experience of HIV, substance use recovery, immigration, and sex work. Additionally, two transgender and nonbinary post-baccalaureate research assistants contributed to the project. Importantly, CAB members represented diverse facets of transgender communities, working in various roles such as artists, students, community advocates, and peer support specialists. Members resided in multiple locations across the U.S., including Rhode Island, Florida, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Aaryn set the stage for equal partnerships between community members and researchers by ensuring that community members were co-investigators in this project. Community members played key leadership roles throughout the research study from survey design, video consent forms, and content, to recruitment materials, recruitment efforts, determining BOTS and NOTS, and helping design guiding principles, sharing results of the study, and taking action.

We congratulate our incredible winners and thank them for their exceptional contributions to HIV research and community engagement.

Stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks!

FEATURED WORK AND AWARDS

[Dr. Suryaram Gummuluru](#) and [Dr. Andrew Henderson](#) have recently received R01 funding from NIDA for their work on "[Mechanisms of Persistent Inflammasome Activation in Myeloid Cells](#)".

[Dr. Christopher Kahler](#) has recently published research in the Journal of Substance Use & Addiction Treatment titled "[Effects of optimism and stage of change on alcohol use and problems among sexual minority men with HIV participating in a brief motivational interviewing intervention.](#)" The study explores how trait optimism and stage of change influence alcohol use outcomes among sexual minority men with HIV participating in motivational interviewing (MI).

[Dr. Fizza Gillani](#) and [Dr. Rami Kantor](#), have recently published research titled "[Acquired Human Immunodeficiency Virus Type 1 Drug Resistance in Rhode Island, USA, 2004-2021](#)" in the Journal of Infectious Diseases. Their study, funded by NIH, presents a longitudinal analysis of transmitted HIV-1 drug resistance in Rhode Island, revealing trends in antiretroviral resistance over time.

The Providence/Boston CFAR Cores are available to help you with your research. Please click the link to request services.

[Request Core Services](#)



ACKNOWLEDGE CFAR (P30AI042853)

Funding from NIH for the CFAR is dependent on evidence that the CFAR is providing value added in the conduct of HIV/AIDS research. One way this support is documented is through the acknowledgement of the Providence/Boston CFAR in publications, abstracts and presentations. If you have received funding, consultation, mentorship, research support services, materials, training, access to shared equipment and/or space from one of the CFAR Cores, please acknowledge the CFAR by using the following statement:

This work was facilitated by the Providence/Boston Center for AIDS Research (P30AI042853).

[Subscribe to this Newsletter](#)

The Providence/Boston Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) is a joint research effort between Brown University/Lifespan and Boston University/Boston Medical Center. The Providence/Boston Center for AIDS research is devoted to the pursuit of translational research to reduce the burden of HIV infection worldwide, with special focus on substance users, women, MSM, justice-involved persons, and at-risk youth. To achieve this goal, we are committed to fostering emerging HIV investigators both domestically and within resource-limited settings.



Providence/Boston CFAR | 164 Summit Ave | Providence, RI 02906 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!