Addressing HIV-Related Disparities Affecting Black Women in the United States

The HIV incidence rate among Black women is 11X the rate of white women and 4X the rate of Latinas.  

Black women are less likely than white women to receive antiretroviral therapy.  

Black women are more likely to die of HIV-related causes.  

Social determinants that contribute to the disparities disproportionately affecting Black women with HIV:

- Poverty, unstable housing, and poor access to quality health care, social services, transportation & childcare are barriers to HIV prevention and care.  
  Structural factors exacerbate social/individual-level factors leading to more sex partners, engaging in risky sexual behaviors, experiencing forced sex from an intimate partner, or increased substance use, which increases HIV risk.

- Higher incarceration and mortality rates among Black men can lead to concurrent partnerships in a community with a higher prevalence of undiagnosed/untreated HIV/STIs.  
  91% of Black women diagnosed with HIV were infected through heterosexual contact.

- HIV stigma & racism within healthcare settings provide context for medical distrust of some Black women, discouraging them from initiating or continuing care.  
  Low-income Black women report lower receipt of medical risk information and health advice from physicians compared with higher income and non-Black women.
Considerations for healthcare professionals treating Black women with HIV

Include conversations around structural racism and trust for both providers and patients in HIV programs for Black women.\(^5\)

Implement culturally tailored HIV/STI interventions specifically for Black women in community supervision programs to help reduce new infections.\(^6,7,8\)

Partner with trusted community leaders or “the gatekeepers,” who are viewed as more relatable than healthcare providers, to deliver HIV-related messaging and programming.\(^6,7\)

Increasing peer support and addressing depression and unmet needs (childcare, unemployment, housing) during routine HIV care visits may be helpful.\(^9,10,11\)

Interventions and resources for healthcare teams and settings providing care to Black women with HIV

- Black Women First Initiative, HRSA HAB, SPNS Models of Care
- Evidence-Informed Interventions for Women of Color with HIV, HRSA HAB, SPNS Models of Care
- Transgender Women of Color Initiative Intervention Manuals, HRSA HAB, SPNS Models of Care
- Addressing Social Determinants of Health and Persons with HIV, MidAtlantic AETC
- Black Women's Health Imperative
- National Black Leadership Commission on Health, Inc.

Infographic references can be found [here](#)