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***Trans Women Living HIV: Addressing an
Unjust Burden and Working to Ensure
Resilience***

***Women as the Face of AIDS Summit, Iris House
May 8, 2017***



About The Well Project

- Non-profit organization with a mission to change the course of the HIV/AIDS pandemic through a unique and comprehensive focus on women and girls
- Leverages technology to improve health outcomes and increase quality of life for women and girls living with HIV
- Provides accessible and comprehensive #information, #community support, and #advocacy building
- Access our resources and join our community at www.thewellproject.org



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Speakers



Octavia Y. Lewis, MPA Islan Nettles Community Project; board of directors, PWN-USA; Positively Trans National Advisory Board



Kiara St. James, New York Trans Advocacy Group; Positively Trans National Advisory Board



Tiommi Jenae Lockett, communications coordinator, community advisory board, *A Girl Like Me*, The Well Project; Positively Trans National Advisory Board



Krista Martel, executive director, The Well Project (*moderator*)



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#SayHerName

Within the first four months of
2017, nine trans women of color
were murdered



**Mesha Caldwell, 41,
Canton, MS on January
4, 2017**



**KeKe Collier, 24,
Chicago, IL on
February 21, 2017**



**Jamie Lee Wounded
Arrow, 28, Sioux Fall,
SD on January 6, 2017**



**Chyna Gibson, 33,
New Orleans, LA on
February 25, 2017**



**JoJo Striker, 23, Toledo,
OH on February 8, 2017**



**Alphonza Watson, 38
Baltimore, MD on
March 22, 2017**



**Ciara McElveen, 21,
New Orleans, LA on
February 27, 2017**

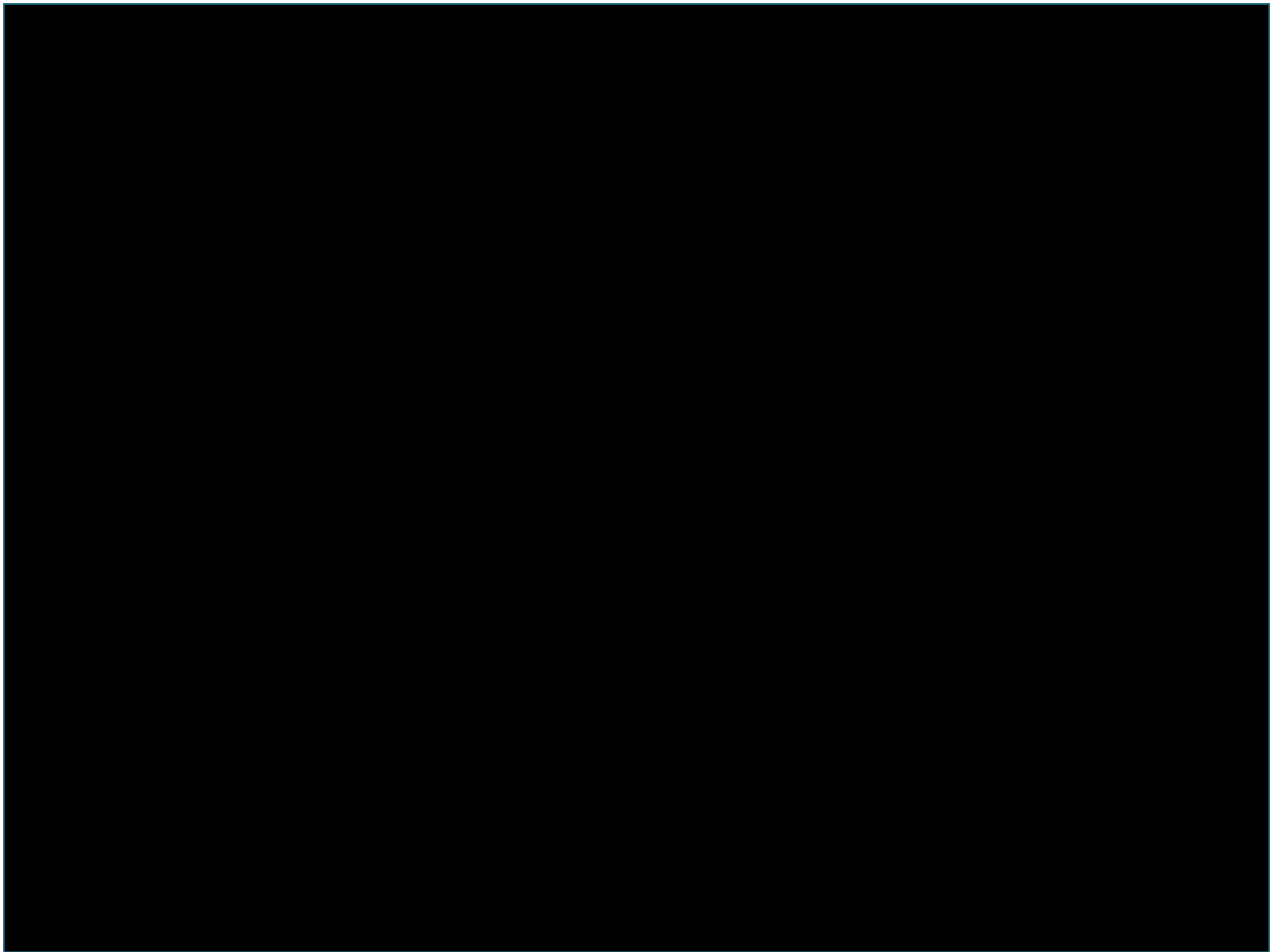


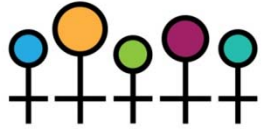
**Chayvis Reed, 28
Miami, FL on April 21,
2017**



**Jaquarrius Holland
(Brown), 18, Monroe,
LA on February 19, 2017**

#SayHerName

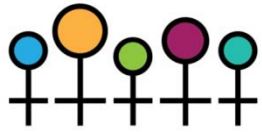




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Agenda

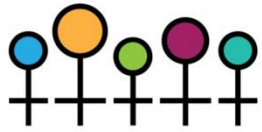
- Overview
- Trans Women Living with HIV
 - Overview
 - Issues Common to Trans Women Living with HIV
- Results of Positively Trans Survey
- Panelists Discuss Successful Interventions
- Q&A



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Trans Women Living with HIV

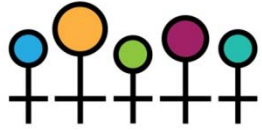




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Overview

- **Transgender:** A term for people whose gender identity is contrary to the sex they were assigned at birth
- **Trans woman:** A term for a transgender individual who currently identifies as a woman
- **Gender identity:** An individual's internalized sense of being either male, female, or variation as well as denouncement of the gender spectrum; because gender identity is *internal*, it is not necessarily visible to others



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The Numbers Tell the Story

- Rate of HIV among trans women is 49x higher than in general adult population
- Worldwide, 19 out of 100 trans women is living with HIV
- In 2010, CDC reported that the largest percentage of new HIV diagnoses in the U.S. was among transgender women
 - 90% of newly diagnosed trans women were African-American or Latina

SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and related identities have been present in various forms throughout history. All cultures have included, with varying degrees of acceptance, individuals who practice same-sex relations as well as those whose gender, gender identity and gender expression challenge prevailing norms, and many cultures still do.



UNITED STATES
Native American Great Plains tribes viewed gender on a spectrum from male to female, including transgender and intersex persons who were considered to have special spiritual significance.



PORTUGAL
16th-19th Century
In Lisbon, communities of men and women were known to have same-sex relationships, and were targeted by the Inquisition.



ITALY
15th-17th Century
During the early Renaissance, "masculine love" was a term used to describe male homosexual orientation (also used in France and England). Michelangelo described same-sex love in his poems, although these references were later edited out. Ancient marble statues unearthed in Rome depicting intersex people inspired a number of Renaissance artists.



ALBANIA
Women identified as *buneshes*, who take a chastity vow at a young age, can live as men and assume traditionally male roles in society and in their family.



ANCIENT GREECE
6th Century BCE - 6th Century CE
Male homosexuality was an accepted phenomenon, practiced by high-status individuals usually with younger men. The poet Sappho wrote about her affection and desire for other women. The philosopher Plato spoke of a third sex, which was both male and female, as part of original human nature.



RUSSIA
The indigenous Chukchi people in Siberia identified seven genders in addition to male and female.



CHINA
1st century BCE - 17th century CE
Homosexuality was considered a sign of cultural edison, was not persecuted, and has been documented as early as the Qing, Han and Tang dynasties in poetry and songs.



INDIA
1st century BCE - 1st century CE
Songs and poems from the ancient Silla Dynasty spoke of affection among men, especially among a group of elite male warriors, the *hwarang*, who were known to form same-sex relationships.



INDONESIA
The Bugis ethnic group, native to the Indonesian island of Sulawesi, recognizes three sexes (female, male and hermaphrodite), four genders (women, men, transmen = *calalai*, and transwomen = *calalai*), and a fifth meta-gender group, the *bissu*.



SAMOA
Fa'afafine are a third-gendered people who are mostly born biologically male, but have gender expressions and identity that embody both masculine and feminine behaviour.



NEPAL
The Buddhist term *Menta*, meaning mental union and loving-kindness, is used to identify transgender people (as well as same-sex couples) and is an accepted part of Nepalese culture since ancient times.



INDIA
Same-sex relations were accepted until British colonialism. Third gender and gender-variant people are still today recognized and accepted throughout Indian cultures.



MEXICO
In the Mayan culture of the Yucatan Peninsula, sexual relations between men were accepted as part of the social structure. Other indigenous peoples in the region have similar traditions.



NIGERIA
Among the Igbo people of Nigeria (and parts of Benin), a married woman with independent wealth may choose to separate from her husband and marry one or more women.



SOUTH AFRICA
16th-20th century
Wealthy and powerful women, could – even if already married to a man – marry other women, and having many wives was seen as a reflection of prosperity.



BENIN
Among the Nani people, women may marry other women. The older generally takes on a traditionally male role and is considered a "female husband". The younger may become pregnant by a man but the legal and social father of the children will be the female husband.



EGYPT
24th century BCE
The ancient Egyptian royal servants Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep are believed to be among the first recorded same-sex couples in history, as reflected by the drawings in their tomb.



IRAN
13th century
In Persian poetry, the notion of *Shahed* (male beauty as testimony to the power of God) was frequently used by many poets, including the Persian poet Saadi Shirazi.



SAUDI ARABIA
8th-9th century
Islamic Hadith (report of the deeds and sayings of Prophet Muhammad) state that the Prophet of Islam issued rulings regarding the personal rights of gender variant people identified as *mukhamathun*, especially concerning inheritance.

THIS INFOGRAPHIC IS PRESENTED BY A JOINT EFFORT BY:



WITH THANKS TO RESEARCHERS AT THE BUREAU CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, UCLA

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA & TRANSPHOBIA
MAY 17, 2014

For more information visit www.transrights.org



The **hijra** is an ancient transgender community in India.

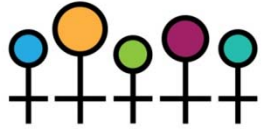
Source: Seeker Stories, NPR



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Not Being Seen or Heard

- Despite these numbers, trans women historically have not been well addressed in HIV efforts
- They are often not even 'seen' (or counted) because they are inadequately categorized
- Trans women may choose not to identify as trans when seeking services due to past negative experiences and/or anticipated stigma and discrimination
- We need to ask the right questions about sex/gender in order to count trans women appropriately

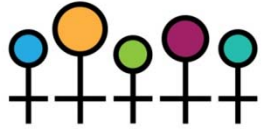


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The Good News

Global changes slowly being made

- 2014: WHO conducted discussions to understand HIV-related experiences of transgender people and incorporated those learnings into the “Consolidated Guidelines for HIV Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment and Care for Key Populations”
- 2015: WHO issued policy brief encouraging countries to establish laws decriminalizing nonconforming gender identities, protecting against discrimination, working toward legal recognition for transgender people
- 2016: U.S. White House Office of National AIDS Policy outlined specific steps to enhance prevention and care efforts for the transgender community



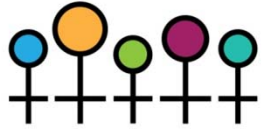
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Issues Common to Trans Women Living with HIV

Many intersecting issues can negatively affect the health outcomes of trans women living with HIV:

“Transgender and gender non-conforming people face injustice at every turn: in childhood homes, in school systems that promise to shelter and educate, in harsh and exclusionary workplaces, at the grocery store, the hotel front desk, in doctors' offices and emergency rooms, before judges and at the hands of landlords, police officers, health care workers and other service providers.”

~ National Center for Transgender Equality

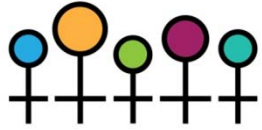


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Stigma and Discrimination

Keep people from:

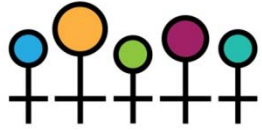
- Getting tested for HIV
- Getting linked to or having access to care
- Staying in care
- Getting HIV drugs
- Taking their HIV drugs correctly (adherence)
- The National Transgender Discrimination Survey found:
 - 63% **reported** discrimination serious enough to impact their ability to support themselves financially and emotionally
 - Trans women of color bear the heaviest burden of discrimination
 - Most likely due to the combined effect of anti-transgender bias and structural racism



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Health Issues

- Compared to cisgender people, transgender people are less likely to:
 - Be on HIV treatment
 - Be adherent when on treatment
 - Have positive experiences with healthcare providers
- Transgender people face additional health issues (NCTE survey):
 - Almost 1 in 5 may be refused medical care because of gender identity in their lifetime
 - Almost a third had at least one negative experience in a doctor's office related to being transgendered



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Health Issues

- There are many negative consequences to poor healthcare access
 - Fewer transwomen living with HIV receive and take the HIV drugs they need to stay healthy
 - Transwomen often access feminizing hormones through underground and unregulated channels, which can result in:
 - Buying unsafe hormones and giving themselves incorrect doses
 - Infection and scarring from unsterile technique or contaminated syringes
 - Sudden death from emboli (getting an air bubble or bit of foreign material in the bloodstream)



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Resilience

Despite obstacles, trans women living with HIV have shown that they can face harassment/violence with determination and grit



www.thewellproject.org

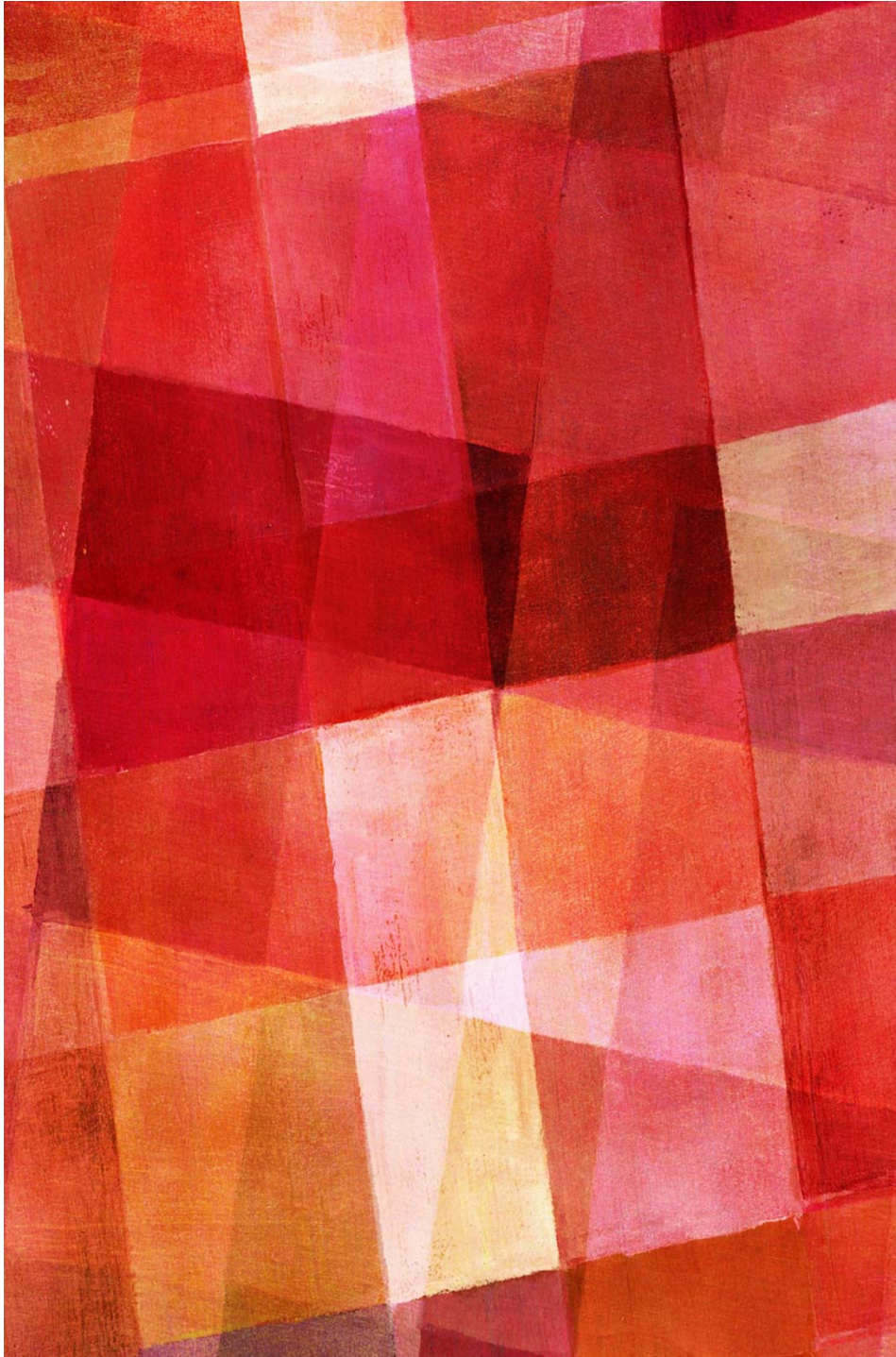


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Results of the Positively Trans Survey

Tiommi Lockett
Positively Trans
The Well Project

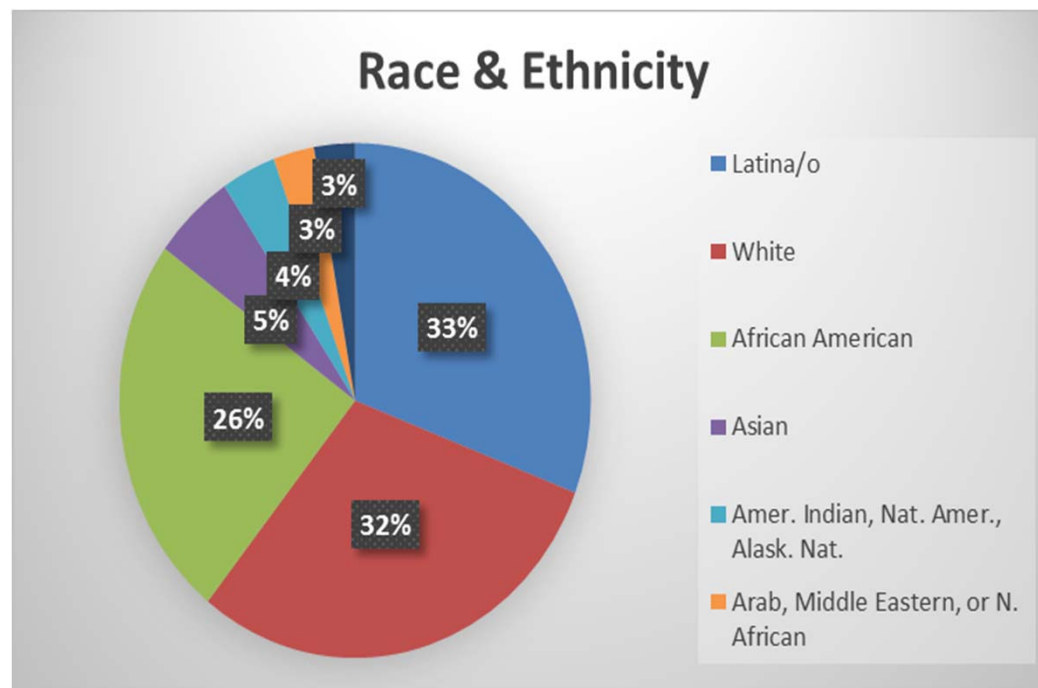
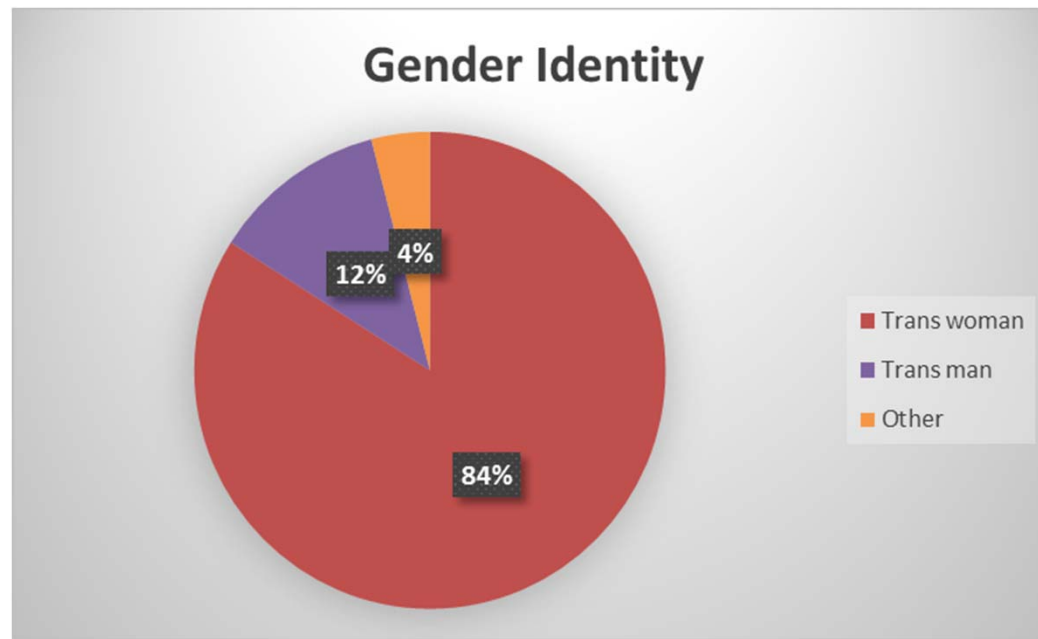
www.thewellproject.org



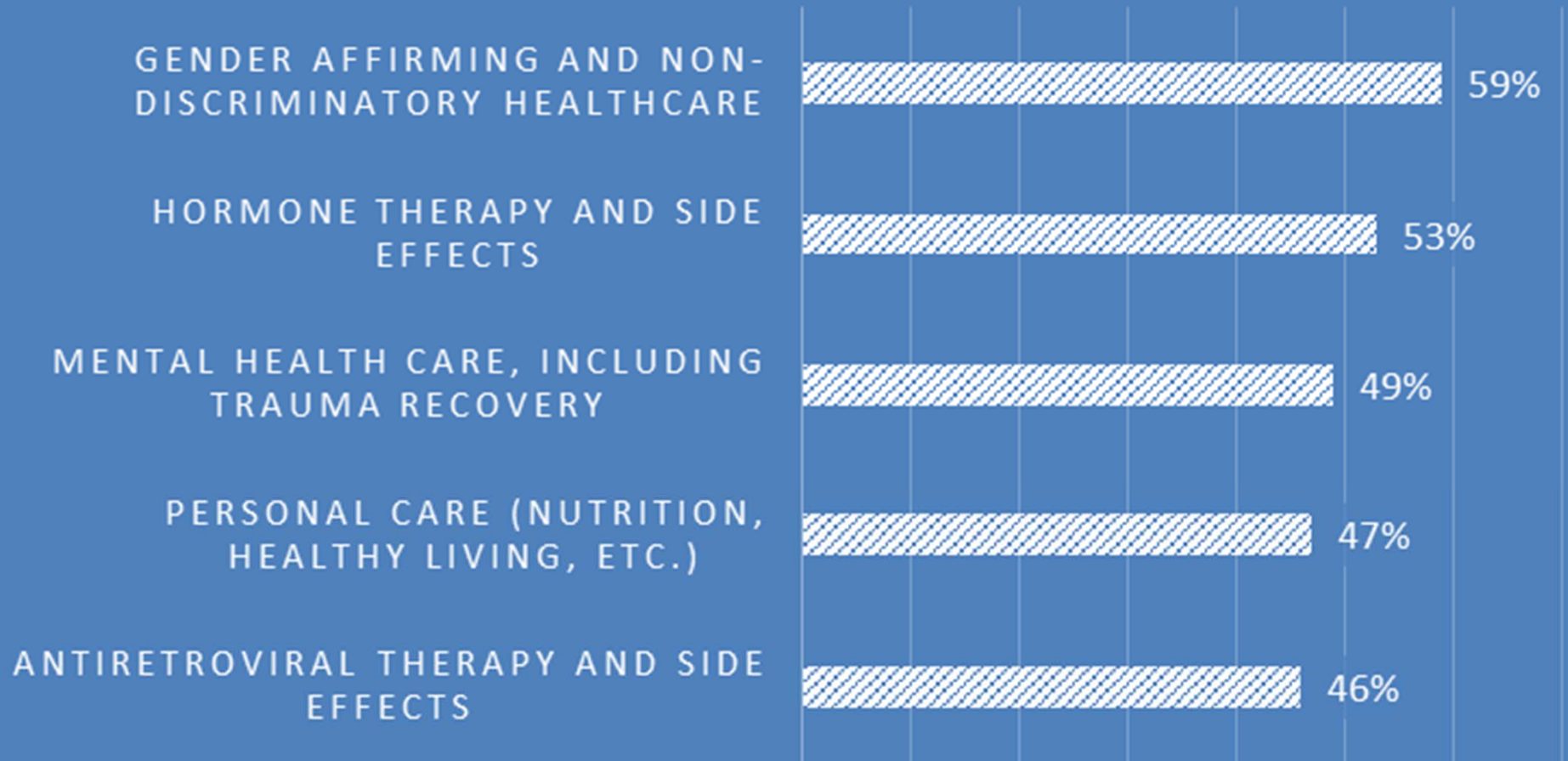
Positively Trans

- Organize and mobilize transgender people living with HIV
- Form network of trans people living with HIV
- Fill the leadership gap in the trans community
- Develop a cadre of trans people living with HIV who will address community's experience of the HIV epidemic through lenses of intersectionality
- Constituents led
- Evidence based advocacy

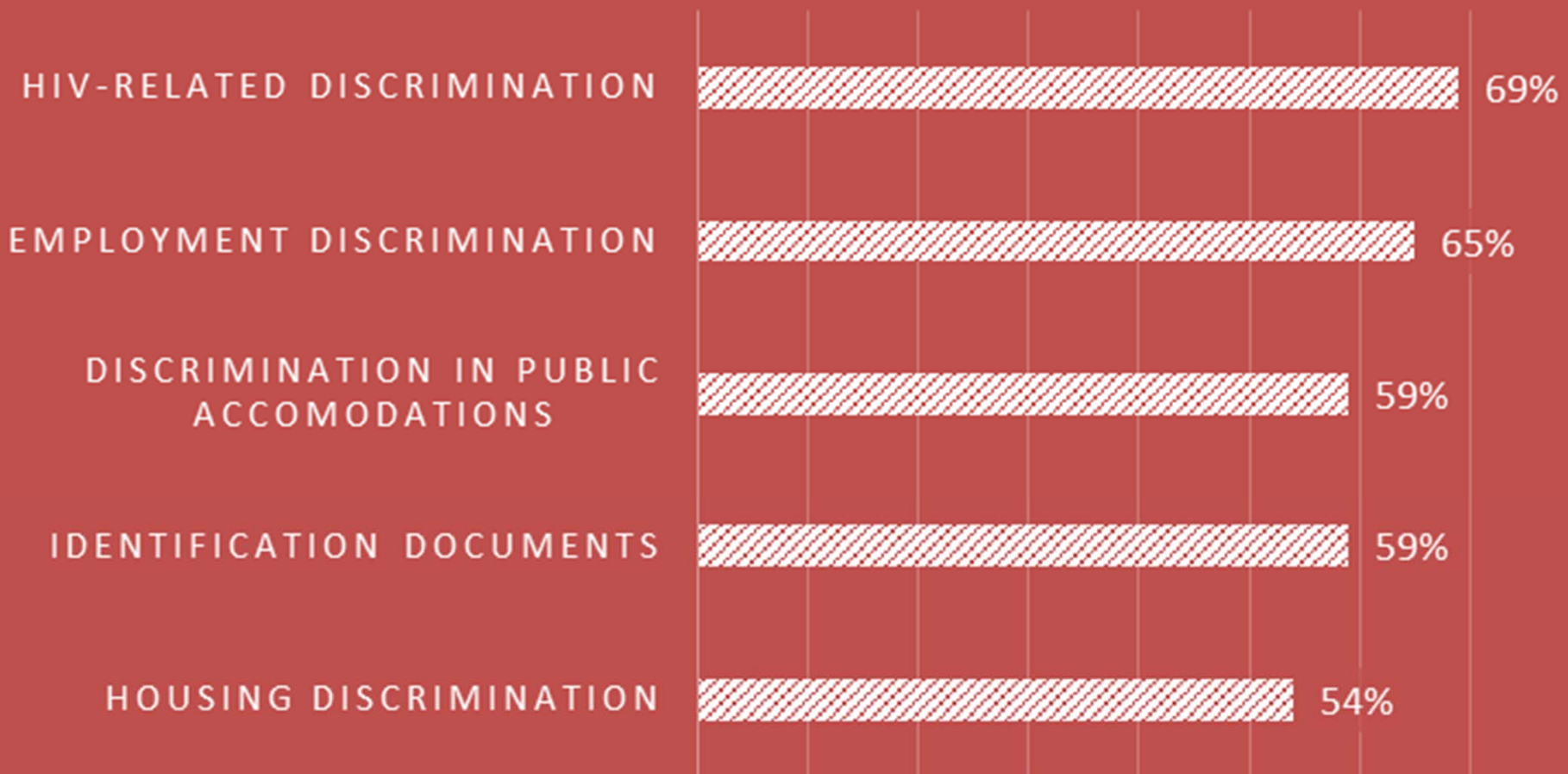
Survey Demographics



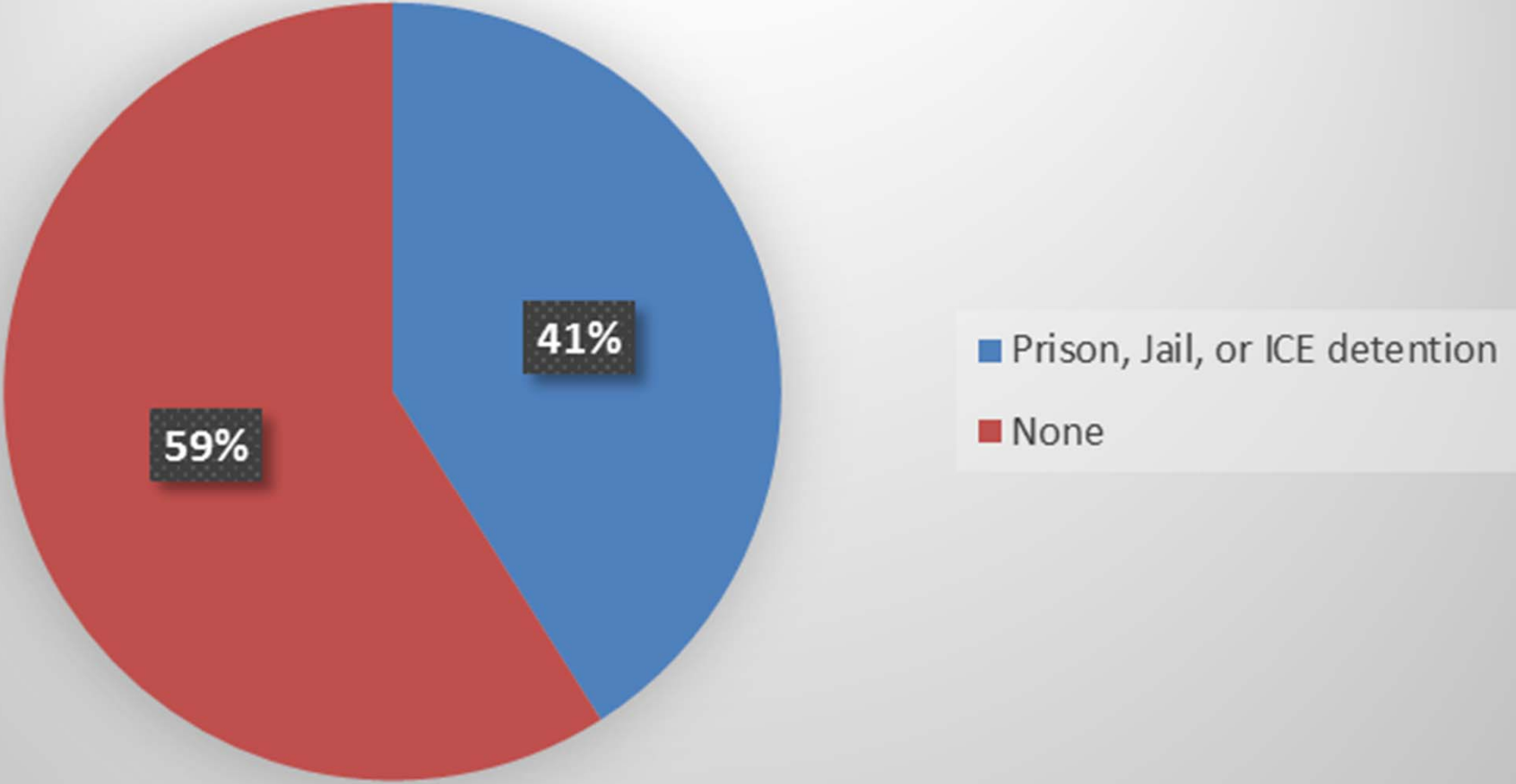
TOP 5 HEALTH CONCERNS



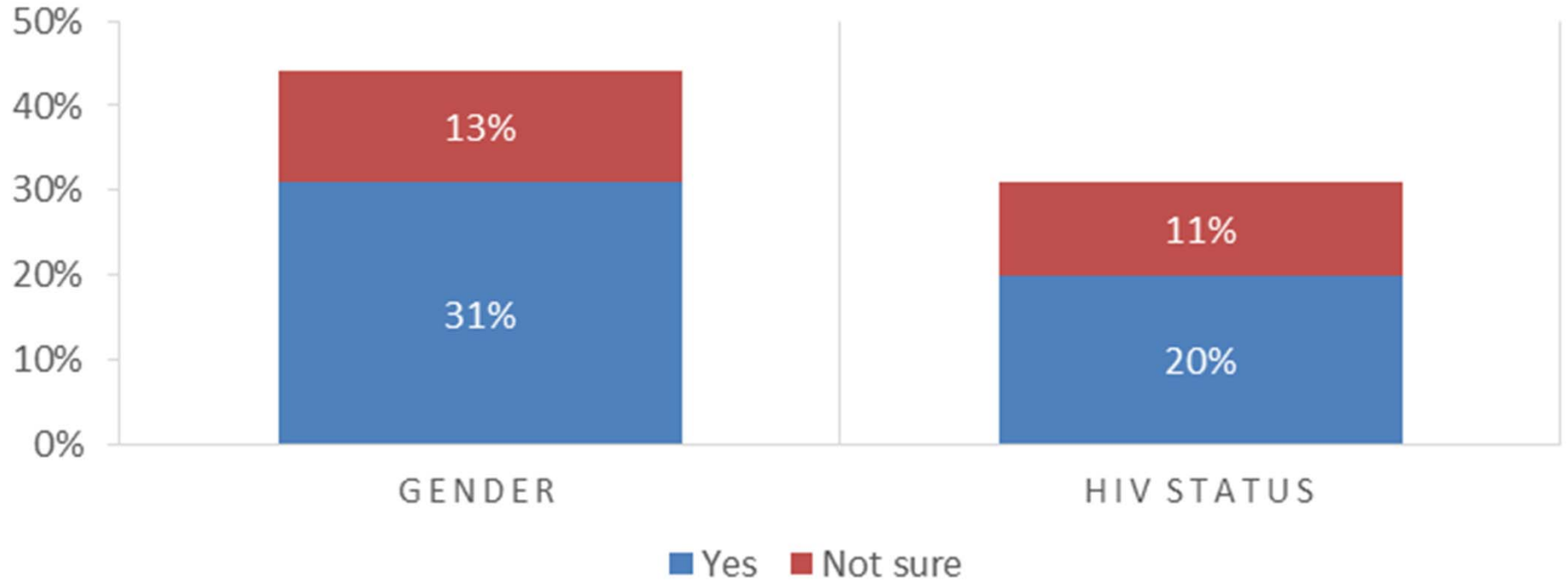
TOP 5 LEGAL PRIORITIES



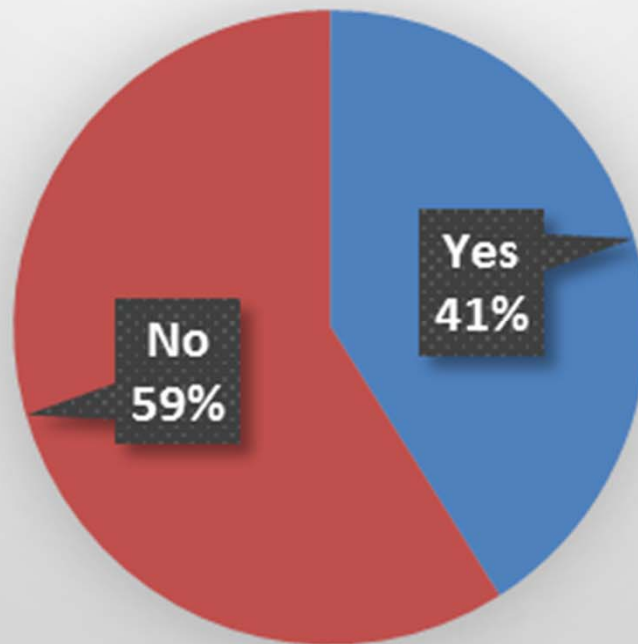
History of Incarceration



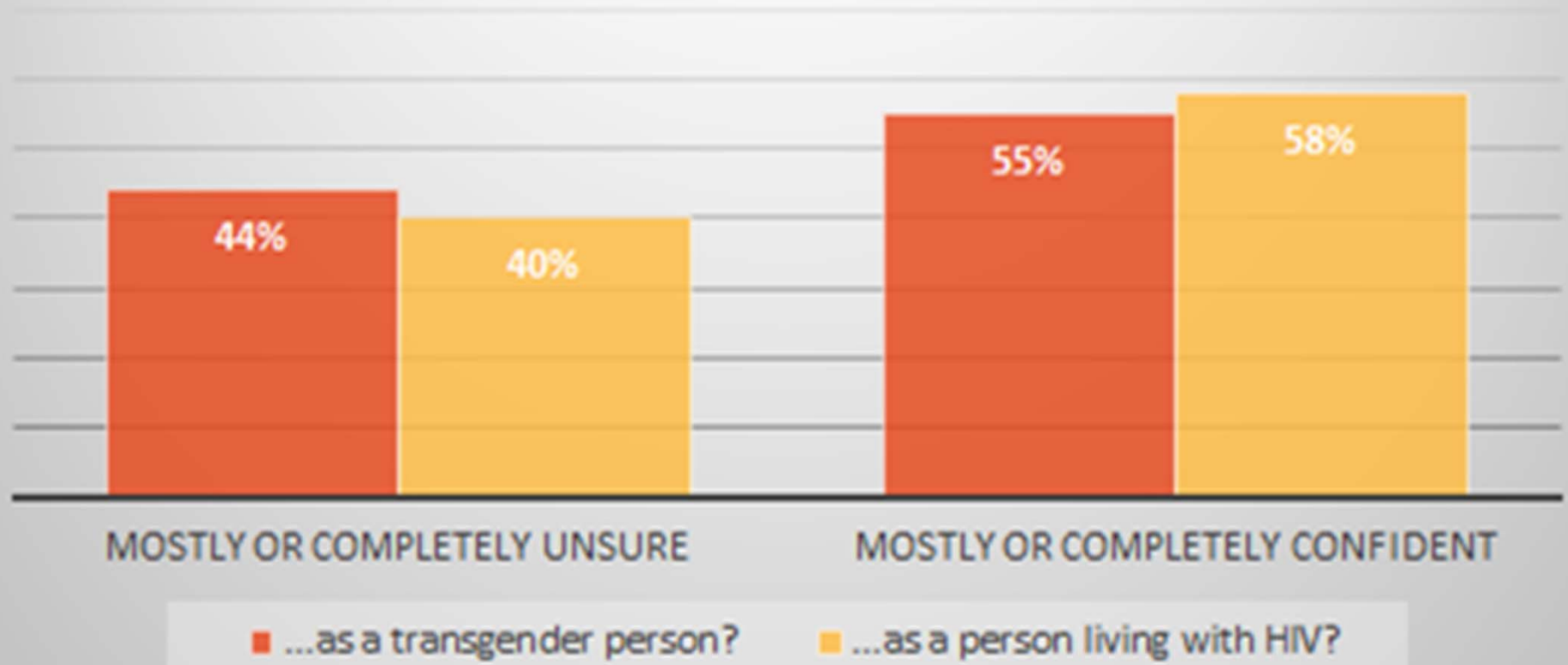
HAS A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER EVER REFUSED YOU CARE BECAUSE OF YOUR...



Have you ever gone more than six months without medical care since your HIV diagnosis?

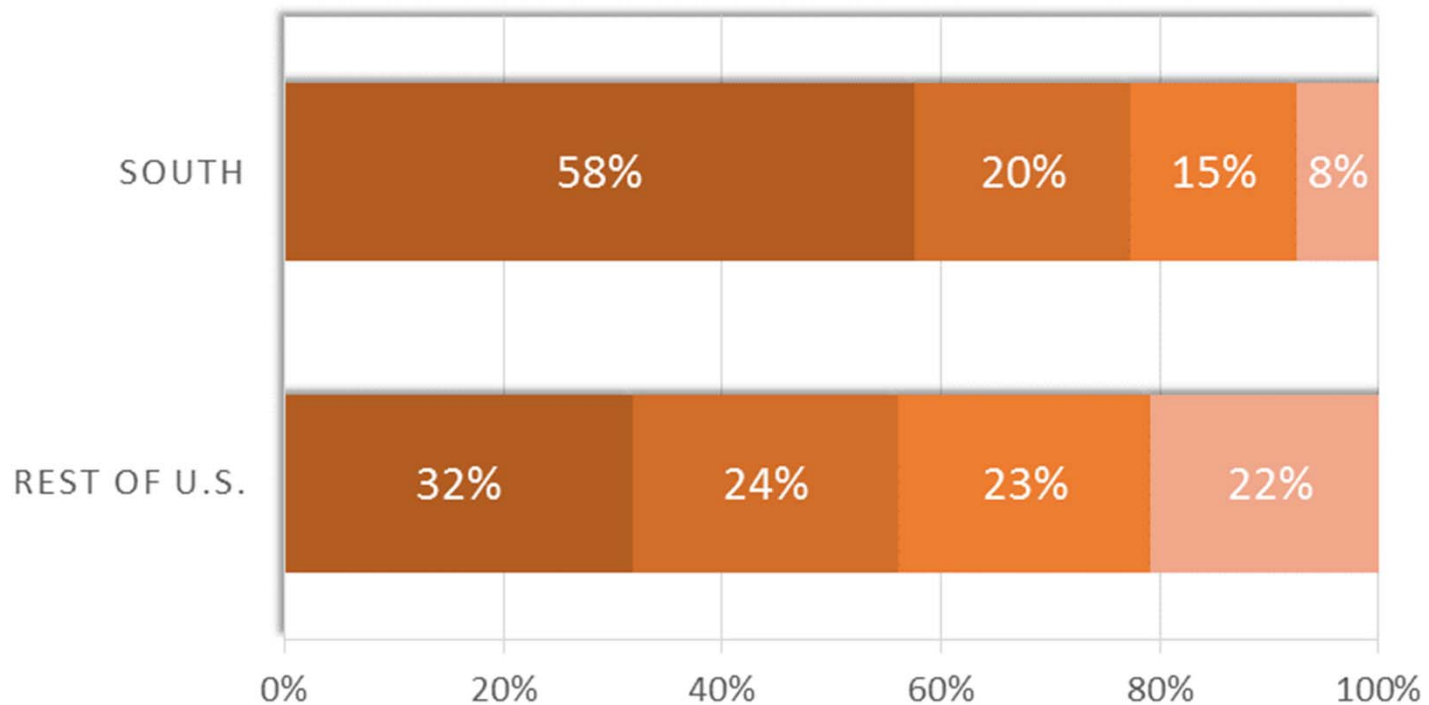


How confident are you that you know your rights...



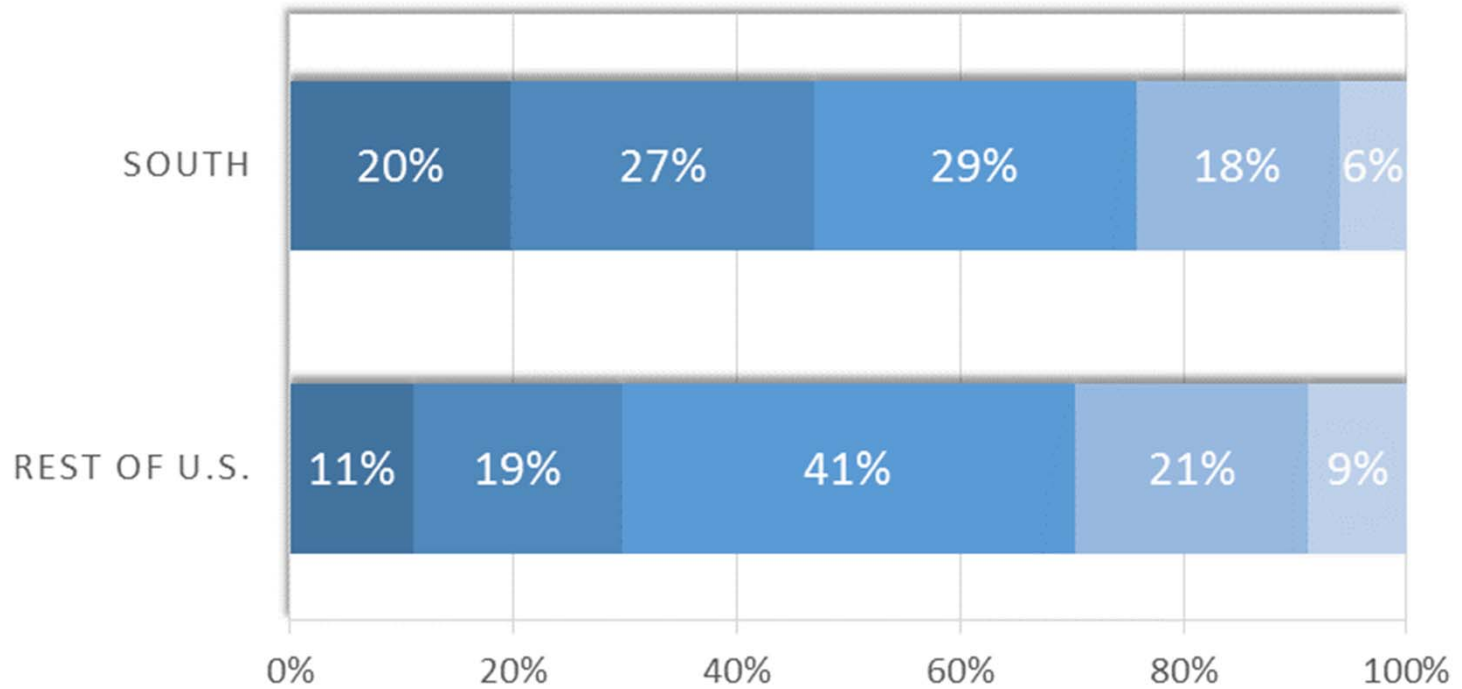
ANNUAL INCOME

■ less than \$12,000 ■ \$12,000 to \$23,000 ■ \$23,000 to \$47,000 ■ more than \$47,000

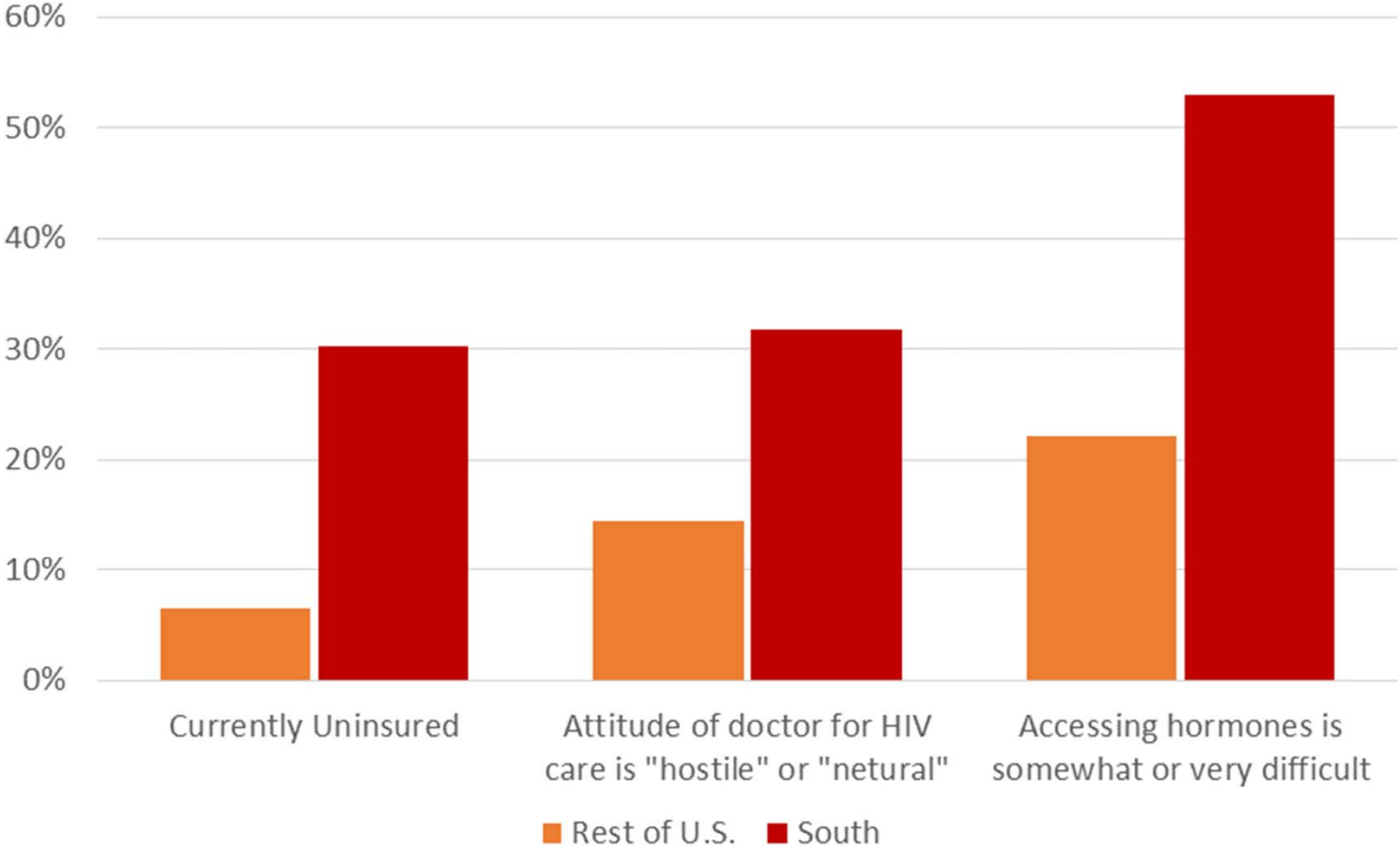


EDUCATION LEVEL

- Less than HS diploma
- HS diploma or GED
- Some College
- College Graduate
- Graduate school

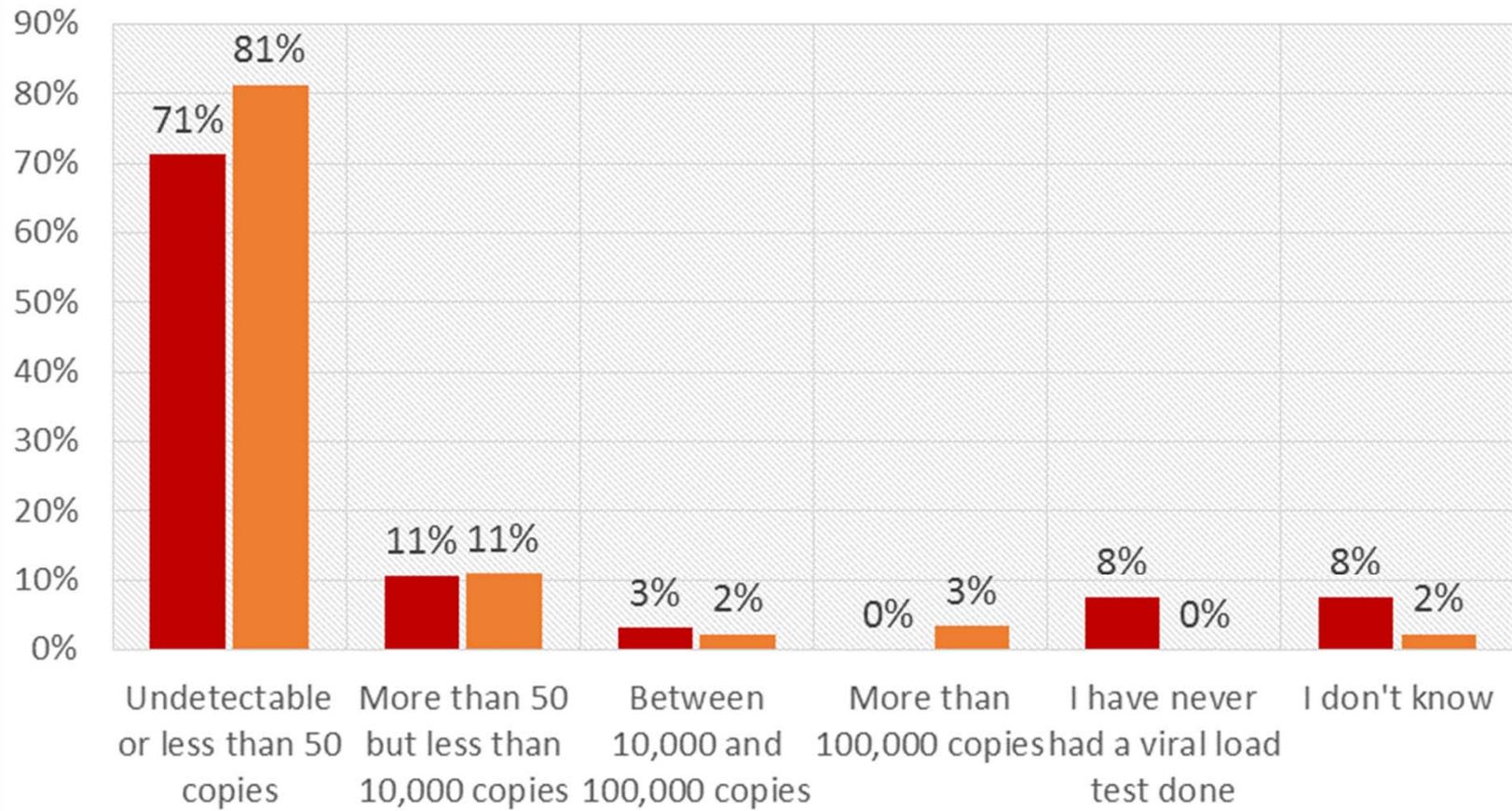


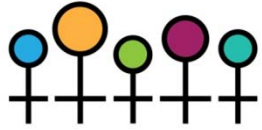
Health care barriers



What was the result of your most recent viral load test?

■ South ■ Rest of U.S.

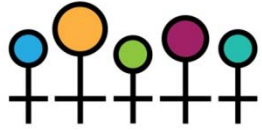




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Panel Discussion

- What are some programs and interventions you see working best? What can we learn from them
- What do you see as the top priorities that need to be addressed in regards to trans women in HIV care/treatment? Prevention?
- Additional comments
- Q&A



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New York Trans Advocacy Group (NYTAG)



**Today
I receive health, wealth,
intelligence, possibilities, and
opportunities in abundance
in my life right now.**

NYTAG

New York Trans Advocacy Group

Contact: NYTransAdvocacy@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/OfficialNYTAG>



NYTAG

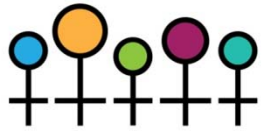
New York
Trans Advocacy
Group

"Breaking Barriers
& Building Bridges"

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

NYTAG
C/O Housing Works
57 Willoughby St., 2nd Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201





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Additional Resources on
www.thewellproject.org

- To learn more:
 - [Trans Women Living with HIV](#)
 - [Transgender Women: HIV Prevention as a Priority](#)
 - For a full list of topic-specific resources:
 - [Resources for Trans Women](#)
 - For more fact sheets and to connect to our community of women living with HIV:
 - www.thewellproject.org
 - www.facebook.com/thewellproject
 - www.twitter.com/thewellproject
-



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Additional Resources

- [Positively Trans \(T+\) \(Transgender Law Center\)](#)
 - [The Center of Excellence for Transgender Health](#)
 - [National Center for Transgender Equality \(NCTE\)](#)
 - [TransLatin@ Coalition](#)
 - [Arianna's Center](#)
 - [Trans Women of Color](#)
 - [Transgender Europe](#)
 - [National LGBTQ Task Force](#)
 - [Trans Lifeline](#)
 - [Positive Women's Network - USA](#)
-