

Engaging Older Adults Living with HIV: Training Peer Research Associates in the Implementation of a Community-Based Research Project PANACHE Ontario Study

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COI Declarations:

Dr. Sharon Walmsley has participated on advisory boards, speaking engagements, symposiums, and clinical studies for ViiV Health Care, GSK, Merck, Janssen, and Gilead Sciences. She receives support as the chair clinical management and aging from the Ontario HIV Treatment Network.

Kate Murzin has consulted for Capacity Builders (OCSA), has been a member of the Ontario HIV Treatment Network(OHTN) Scientific Advisory Board, has received research funding from OHTN and is an employee at **Realize**.

Elizabeth Racz has received honoraria from OHTN HIV Endgame funding and research funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, and employed at **Realize** and the University Health Network.



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Background

- As the first generation of people living with HIV (PLWHIV) reaches 60 years of age and older, we seek to identify the gaps in access to relevant care and support
- In one step to explore these gaps, the Preferences and Needs for Aging Care among HIV Elders (PANACHE) ON team conducted nine Ontario community consultations
- To facilitate these consultations we hired and trained Peer Research Associates (PRAs).

Methods

- 8 PRAs were hired, from applicants with the following characteristics: older adult PLWHIV, some previous experience in facilitation or research and reflective of community diversity.
- PRAs completed a 2-day group training program (Figure 1.) using a community-based research (CBR) facilitation guide ^{1,2}.

Figure 1.



To evaluate the process

- pre-training knowledge and skills were ranked by the individuals on a five-point scale ranging from “I am a novice” to “I am an expert”;
- post-training knowledge and skills were ranked on a four-point scale ranging from “not confident at all” to “very confident”

References:

1. Eaton, A. D. (2019). Filmed simulation to train peer researchers in community-based participatory research. *Social Work Research*, 43(3), 195-199. <https://doi.org/10.1093/swr/svz011>

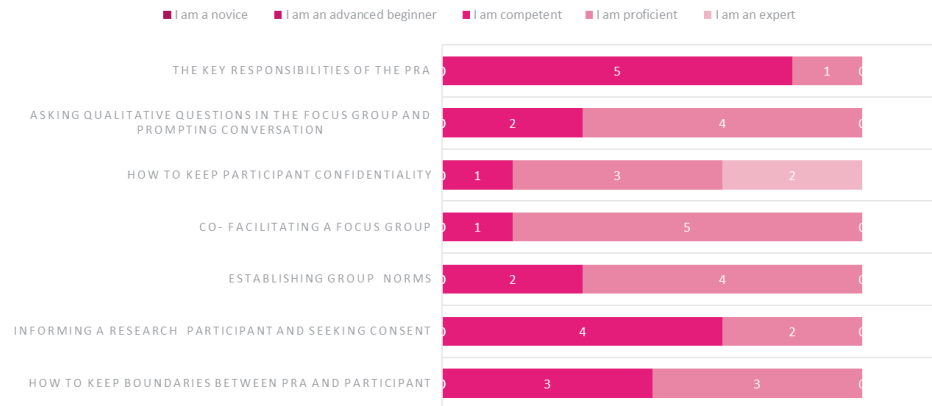
2. Eaton, A. D., Ibáñez-Carrasco, F., Craig, S. L., Chan Carusone, S., Montess, M., Wells, G. A., & Ginocchio, G. F. (2018). A blended learning curriculum for training peer researchers in community-based participatory research. *Action Learning: Research and Practice*, 15(2), 139-150. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767333.2018.1462143>

Results

Prior to training

- PRAs self-identified as competent and/or proficient in skills and knowledge of facilitating a community consultation (Figure 2.)
 - PRAs all had previous experience as facilitators

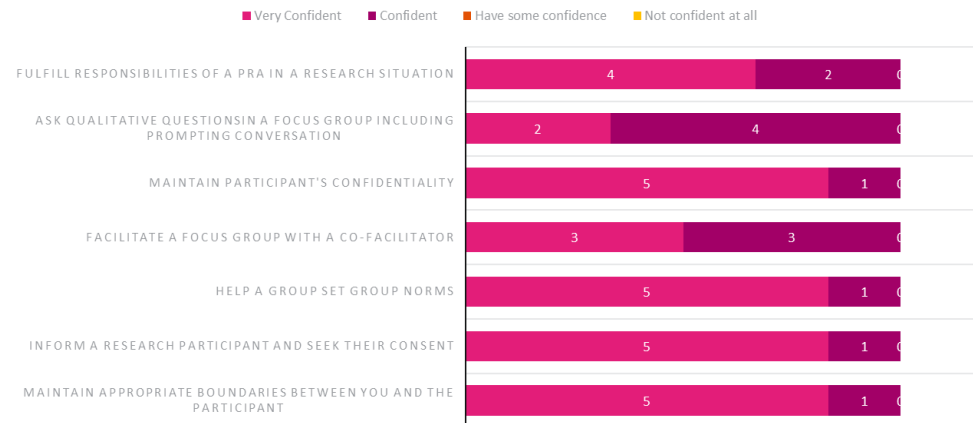
FIGURE 2. PRE TRAINING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS



After training

- PRAs self-identified as either confident or very confident in their:
- increased knowledge and skills to facilitate community consultations,
- their improved understanding of the PRA's responsibility in CBR
- seeking consent and maintaining participant confidentiality (Figure 3.)

FIGURE 3. POST TRAINING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS



Conclusion

PRAs working in pairs, successfully facilitated 9 community consultations, each including 5-13 participants;

PRAs supported the exchange of knowledge, and felt prepared for their sessions;

Training older PLWHIV as part of a CBR project, built research capacity.

- **Favorable components of the training were described by the PRAs as:**
 - an increase in their confidence facilitating small groups,
 - the opportunity to practice applied skills in real time,
 - the exchange of support and feedback from experienced facilitators
 - the chance to meet and connect with peers
- **More Challenging components of training included:**
 - Density of information (“ a lot of info to cover in two days”)
 - Intensity of training (“by the end of the day, you’re done”)