HIV stigma as a social determinant of health in Puerto Rico

Souhail Malavé Rivera, PhD

souhail.malave@upr.edu

University of Puerto Rico
Medical Sciences Campus
School of Public Health
HIV stigma as a social determinant of health

- Hispanics/Latinos in the US are disproportionally affected by HIV.
- Puerto Rico has some of the most worrisome HIV/AIDS statistics in the US and its territories.
- Stigmatization is a social condition. Stigma should be addressed from the structural social determinants that create and support it.
- HIV stigma impacts HIV prevention and access to care.
Challenges

• Social-construction of HIV as a negative condition.

• HIV stigma poses a major health risk.

• Healthcare professionals stigmatizing attitudes.

• Socio-structural barriers to develop inclusive policies.
Accomplishments

• Development of culturally appropriate research and interventions.

• Examples:
Lessons learned

• Multisectorial response
  • Populations made vulnerable in the forefront
  • Culturally appropriate interventions
  • Evidence-based
  • Laws and policies require revisions

• Transdisciplinary collaborations
  – Inclusion of public health scientists, economists, planners, law experts, among others

• Capacity building
  • Across disciplines
  • Impact in curricula