

HOWARD UNIVERSITY HIV-HCV CARIBBEAN CLINICIANS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (HU-CCCOP)



THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY HIV TELEHEALTH TRAINING CENTER (HU-TTC)

launched the innovative *HU HIV-HCV Caribbean Clinicians Community of Practice Program (HU-CCCOP)* in Spring of 2019. *HU-CCCOP* is a distance-based training program for Caribbean clinicians who are interested in honing their skills in HIV and Hepatitis C (HCV) testing, diagnosis, treatment, care and support. The rationale for the *HU-CCCOP* is that despite a reported decline in HIV prevalence in the Caribbean over the past three decades, and despite its small population size, the Caribbean has continued to be branded with the second-highest HIV prevalence globally, after sub-Saharan Africa. Similarly, the percentage of people in the Caribbean with suppressed viral loads is well below the global average.

The most recent available data from UNAIDS¹ report that by the end of 2018, 340,000 people in the Caribbean were living with HIV. The report also indicated that 16,000 in the region were newly infected with HIV and about 56% of adults and 42% of children were in treatment during this period.

Regarding Hepatitis (HCV), the World Health Organization (WHO)² has estimated that 4.1 million people are living with chronic Hepatitis C in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Of this number, only 25 percent have been diagnosed and of those, only 300,000 are receiving treatment. WHO has postulated that with the availability of new treatments about 90% of those infected with HCV can be cured, thereby reducing the risk of death due to liver cancer or cirrhosis.

Data also show that in the Americas, including the Caribbean, more than 125,000 deaths each year are associated with viral hepatitis. Almost 99 percent of these deaths are due to Hepatitis B and C.³ This begs the need for clinicians to become more actively involved and increase their efforts to widen access to diagnosis and treatment.

The ten Caribbean Island States selected to participate in this training program have the highest prevalence rates of HIV infection in the region. These infection rates exceed the global HIV prevalence of .08%. Furthermore, HCV in this Caribbean region accounts for nearly 6% of the 71 million people globally with HCV infection.

1 <https://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-around-world/latin-america/overview>

2 <https://www.paho.org/hq/dmdocuments/2016/2016-cha-infographic-hepatitis-b-c.pdf>

3 <https://www.paho.org/hq/dmdocuments/2016/2016-cha-infographic-hepatitis-b-c.pdf>

P1-2 (HU-TTC) at Howard University

HU HIV-HCV Caribbean Clinicians Community of Practice Program (HU-CCCOP) is a distance-based training program. Hone skills in HIV and Hepatitis C (HCV) testing, diagnosis, treatment, care and support.

P2 HU HIV/HCV HU-CCCOP Country Focal Points

P4 VOICES FROM THE FIELD / Spotlight - Barbados

P4 HIV/AIDS Awareness Days

World AIDS Day

Connect to HU-CCCOP at <https://www.huttc.org/cccop>

The Island States currently participating in *HU-CCCOP* are:



Bahamas	Barbados
Belize	Dominican Republic
Guyana	Haiti
Jamaica	Suriname
Trinidad & Tobago	US Virgin Islands

The US Virgin Islands (USVI) are a U.S. territory, but their geographical location, shared traditions, customs and values are Caribbean in nature. Furthermore, the USVI has a consistently high HIV prevalence rate. Thus, they are included *HU-CCCOP*.

To strengthen the capacity of the Caribbean HIV-HCV clinical workforce, *HU-CCCOP* offers distance-based courses led by expert faculty utilizing the latest science in HIV/HCV diagnosis, treatment, management and care. Accompanying the didactic component of the training are related case-based studies that allow participants to become actively engaged in problem solving, while simultaneously strengthening the proficiency of their analytical and clinical decision-making skills. With respect to the online courses offered by the program, there is a high demand by *HU-CCCOP* participants for this content and knowledge provided by the training. This fact is bolstered by the consistently high course attendance rate (96%) and also by remarks received from the focal points.

To date, 427 clinicians have completed our trainings since the webinars were launched in July 2019. In addition to the 10 selected Island States, clinicians from Antigua & Barbuda; Bermuda; as well as St. Kitts and Nevis have participated in our trainings. *HU-CCCOP* is funded by Gilead Sciences, Inc. and is directed by Dr. Goulda Downer, Associate Professor in the College of Medicine at Howard University. Dr. Downer is of Jamaican descent. Fully cognizant of the culture, context and complexities of HIV/HCV in the Caribbean region, Dr. Downer was deliberate in selecting the HIV/HCV clinical experts to support this project. Consequently, most of the *HU-CCCOP* expert faculty boast Caribbean ancestry; or have worked in the region. This strategic direction has allowed for a cultural competency approach to be built into the trainings. Meet our expert faculty and their country of origin here.



LIST OF FOCAL POINTS

HU-CCCoP Island State Focal Points

COUNTRY	NAME & TITLE	ORGANIZATION
BAHAMAS	Ms. Jenny Laing, <i>Social Worker</i>	Grand Bahama Health Services
BARBADOS	Dr. Dale Babb, <i>Medical Officer of Health</i>	Vashti Inniss Empowerment Centre, Ladymeade Gardens, St. Michael
BELIZE	Mr. Enrique Romero, <i>Executive Director</i>	National AIDS Commission
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	Dr. John Waters, <i>Medical Director</i>	Center for Integrated Training and Research (COIN)
GUYANA	Dr. Abiola Jacobs, <i>Director</i>	National Care and Treatment Centre
HAITI	Dr. Anthony Monfiston, <i>Project Officer</i>	UNAIDS Country Office - Haiti
JAMAICA	Dr. Diahann Dale, <i>Medical Officer (Health)</i>	Ministry of Health Western District Trelawny Health Department
SURINAME	Dr. Monique Holtuin, <i>National AIDS Program Coordinator/ Focal Point for HIV Treatment and Care</i>	Ministry of Health
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	Dr. Ayanna Sebro, <i>Technical Director</i>	National AIDS Coordinating Committee Secretariat
US. VIRGIN ISLANDS	Dr. Donna Christensen, MD, <i>Consultant</i>	Expert Consultant

The successful Island State specific marketing of HU-CCCoP was carried out by focal points on each island. Focal points are knowledgeable clinicians who have access to their peers and who are well-informed about the HIV/HCV priorities of their Island State. These individuals marketed to their peers and helped to prioritize regional HIV/HCV training topics which were researched, CME/CEU certified and presented during the program year.

Number of Caribbean Clinicians Who Participated In HU-CCCoP Webinar Trainings – **427**



CARIBBEAN HIV DATA AT-A-GLANCE (2018)

- 340,000 People living with HIV*
- 1.2% Adult HIV prevalence (ages 15 - 49)
- 16,000 New HIV infections
- 6,700 AIDS-related deaths
- 56% Adults on Antiretroviral Treatment*
- 42% Children on Antiretroviral Treatment*

*All Adults/Children living with HIV

UNAIDS Data 2019; <https://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-around-world/latin-america/overview>

HU-CCCoP at Howard University

(continued from page 1)

HU-CCCoP Expert Faculty Members
Dr. Vladimir Berthaud (Haiti)
Dr. Donna Christensen (USVI)
Dr. Keith Crawford (US)
Dr. Leleka Doonquah (Jamaica)
Dr. Danielle Hairston (US)
Dr. Orlando Harris (Jamaica)
Dr. Helena Kwakwa (Ghana)
Dr. John McNeil (Trinidad & Tobago)
Dr. Mallika Mootoo (Guyana)
Dr. Ruth Ramos (Cuba)

In addition to the expert faculty members, Ms. Denise Bailey M.Ed, (Trinidad & Tobago) and Ms. Adora Iris Lee, MPH (Bahamas) fulfill project management and coordination roles.

HCV IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION: DID YOU KNOW?

- Approximately 4.1 million people are affected by Hepatitis C in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Only 15% of people living with Hepatitis C in Latin America and the Caribbean are diagnosed, and just 14% of people are aware they have Hepatitis C.
- 3% of all deaths in Latin America and the Caribbean between 2008 and 2010 were due to hepatic cancer, liver failure, chronic hepatitis, acute viral hepatitis and cirrhosis.
- Hepatitis C continues to be a silent epidemic. Most people do not know they have the infection because the symptoms may take many years before they appear.

<https://www.paho.org/hq/dmdocuments/2016/2016-cha-infographic-hepatitis-b-c.pdf>

PANCAP fully endorses PrEP:

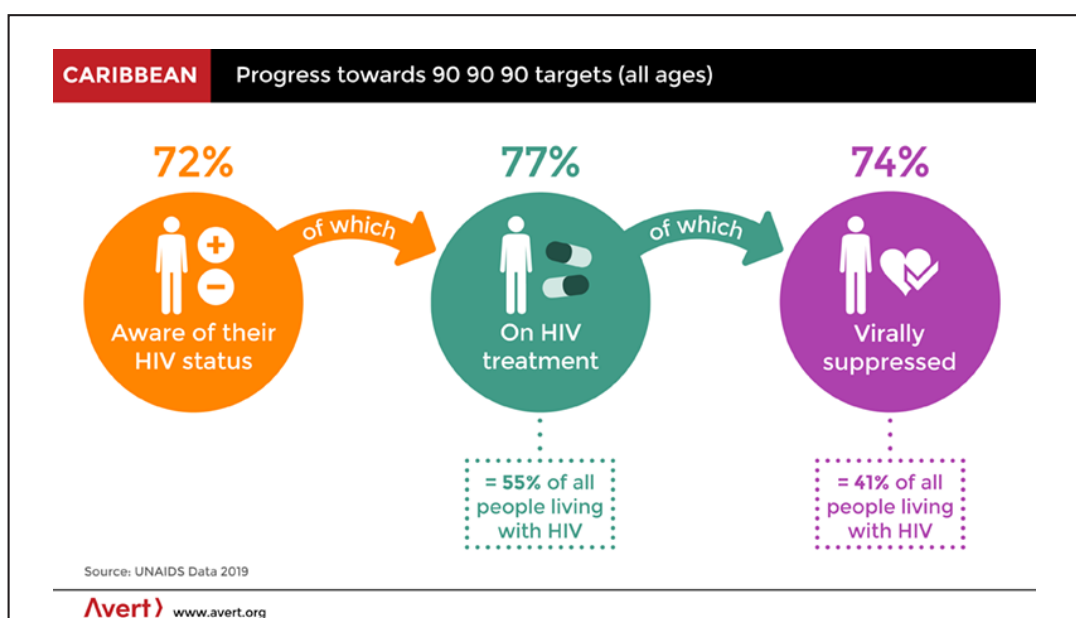
For the latest information, click on this link:
<https://pancap.org/pancap-releases/pancap-fully-endorses-prep/>

UNAIDS 90-90-90 TARGETS FOR 2020:

Where does the Caribbean region stand?

UNAIDS 90-90-90 TARGETS FOR 2020	PROGRESS TOWARD UNAIDS 90-90-90 TARGETS (all ages)
90% are aware of their HIV status	72% are aware of their HIV status
90% of those aware are on HIV treatment	77% of those aware are on HIV treatment
90% on HIV treatment are virally suppressed	74% on HIV treatment are virally suppressed

Source: UNAIDS data, 2019; <https://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-around-world/latin-america/overview>



Source: <https://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-around-world/latin-america/overview>

TUNE-IN OR JOIN-IN (Webinars)

■ **HU-CCCoP Webinar Series:** To view any previous online course conducted for clinicians, go to the Howard University TeleHealth Training Center website by clicking on this link: <https://www.huttc.org/cccop/index.html>

■ **The State of HIV in 2020:** A webinar will be hosted by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Global Health Policy Center on Monday, February 3, 2020 from 10:30 am - 12:15 pm to explore the state of the HIV epidemic: where we are now, what we know works, and what can be accomplished in 2020. For more information, click on this link: <https://www.csis.org/events/success-or-regress-state-hiv-2020>.



VOICES FROM THE FIELD

QUESTION: Do you feel that the focused trainings have impacted positively on HIV/HCV prevention, care and treatment for the citizens in your country?

“Yes. I think it has supported the range of practitioners by improving their knowledge base about some aspects of HIV/HCV prevention, treatment and care that are not regularly explored in their workplace settings.”

– Dr. Diahann Dale, Jamaica

“The sessions presented information to support improvement in clinical management. I hope that it can be continued over a longer period.”

– Dr. Ayanna Sebro, Trinidad and Tobago

“Yes I do. This is especially true for me personally as it has changed my practice. I have also received feedback from some participants about the information shared in sessions”.

– Dr. Dale Babb, Barbados

SPOTLIGHT ON AN HU-CCCoP FOCAL ISLAND STATE



Spotlight on Barbados

- In 2017, Barbados had a population of 286, 233 with an estimated HIV prevalence rate of 1.6 for ages 15-49.
- Barbados has made significant progress in meeting the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets, since currently there are 87 percent of persons living with HIV who know their status. ART coverage stands at 65 percent of those diagnosed, with viral suppression at 84 percent among those on ART according to 2017 data from the Ministry of Health and Welfare.

https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Western-Hemisphere_Caribbean-Region_COP19-Strategic-Directional-Summary_public.pdf

- On World AIDS Day 2019, Dr. Anton Best, Barbados Senior Medical Health Officer stated, *“By now we should be seeing less people becoming HIV positive. ... Of the people being diagnosed, a lot of them are being diagnosed late, which means we are not getting to the more vulnerable people earlier. If we diagnose them earlier from a public health standpoint, it means we would be able to get them into treatment and reduce the likelihood of them not only being ill, but also being able to spread HIV”.*

AWARENESS DAYS

CARIBBEAN AMERICAN HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY *

JUNE 8

* Commemorated in the US Virgin Islands

<https://www.hiv.gov/topics/caribbeanamericanday>



NATIONAL HIV TESTING DAY

JUNE 27*

* Commemorated in the US Virgin Islands

<https://www.hiv.gov/events/awareness-days/hiv-testing-day>

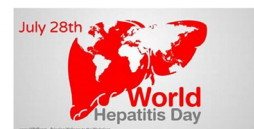


WORLD HEPATITIS DAY

Test. Treat. Hepatitis

JULY 28

<https://www.worldhepatitisday.org/>



WORLD AIDS DAY

DECEMBER 1

https://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=8983:2013-hiv-hepatitis-tuberculosis-sexually-transmitted-infections&Itemid=40077&lang=en



THE HU-CCCOP TEAM

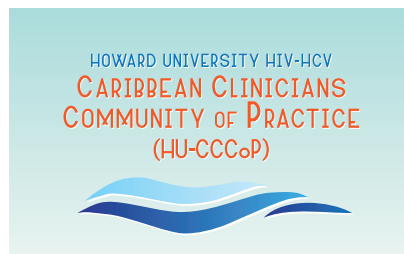
Goulda A. Downer, PhD, FAND, RD, LN, CNS
HU-CCCOP Howard University College of Medicine
gdowner@howard.edu
Tele: 202-865-8146

Denise Bailey, M.Ed.
Project Manager
HU-CCCOP- Howard University College of Medicine
den_bailey@howard.edu
Tele: 202-865-8394

Adora Iris Lee, MPH
Project Coordinator - Consultant
HU-CCCOP -Howard University College of Medicine
Tele: 202-865-8392

HU-CCCOP PARTNERS

Barbados Bahamas
Belize
Dominican Republic
Guyana
Haiti
Jamaica
Suriname
Trinidad & Tobago
US Virgin Islands



This Project is funded by a grant from Gilead Sciences, Inc.

Copyright © 2020 • Howard University Telehealth Training Center (HU-TTC)
HIV-HCV Caribbean Clinicians Community of Practice (HU-CCCOP)
All rights reserved

Our mailing address is:

Howard University Telehealth Training Center
Howard University HIV-HCV Caribbean Clinicians Community of Practice Program (HU-CCCOP)
1840 7th Street NW
Washington DC 20001
202-865-8146 (tele) • 202-667-1382 (fax)
<https://www.huttc.org/cccop>