

# Pláticas & Stories Breaking Down HIV Stigma Through Storytelling

Six Sense:

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## INTRODUCTION

### Project Purpose & Description

The project's purpose is to reduce HIV-related stigma among Latine adults in the city of Long Beach. The proposed intervention: Pláticas & Stories is based on a study conducted by Rios-Ellis et al. (2015). In partnership with the LGBTQ Center in Long Beach, the intervention could highlight to providers the importance to follow and become informed of cultural practices such as language preferences, which include phrases and terms to create a trust-based relationship with clients by de-bunking myths surrounding HIV. Participants attended a 2-hour in-person workshop, *Pláticas and Stories: Breaking Down HIV Stigma*, which used culturally relevant materials—including a community-created zine—to promote HIV education and reduce stigma. The bilingual (Spanish and English) zines (mini magazines) honors grassroots HIV advocacy and serves as a visual guide during the plática.

### Social Problem & Target Population

The social problem is increased HIV infection rates among Latine population. The target population is Latine adults (ages 18+) living in or around the 90802-zip code.

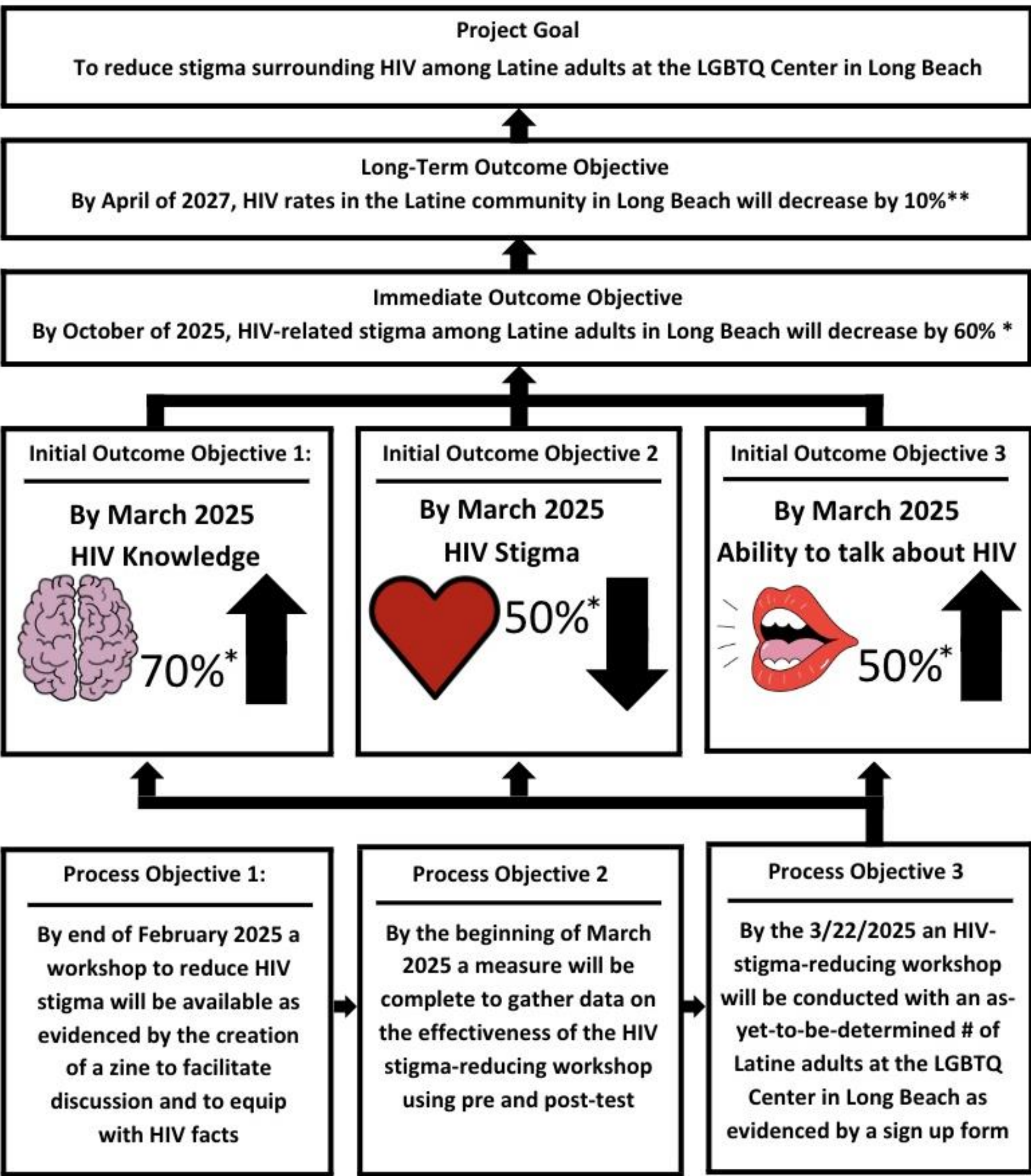
### Scope of Social Problem

- 4,286 Long Beach residents live with HIV (Long Beach Health & Human Services, 2024).
- 85% of new HIV diagnoses are male and 28% are between the ages of 40-49 (Long Beach Health & Human Services, 2024)
- Latine individuals constitute 42% of new diagnoses, 37% of individuals living with HIV, 37% of individuals living with AIDS, and 21% of HIV/AIDS-related deaths in Long Beach (Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.a.)
- 90802 community had a 2–3x higher increase in HIV cases than it surrounding neighbors (LBDHHS, 2022)
- Interviews revealed a theme of residents feeling community needs are not prioritized with one proposing a solution of “partnering with APLA for community health workshops: sex ed, HIV awareness campaign, trans youth.”

### Pláticas & Stories in Integrated Health

The workshop aligns with integrated health in social work by addressing the social and cultural determinants of health—such as stigma, discrimination, and misinformation—through a culturally responsive, person-centered approach. The workshop fosters open dialogue, community storytelling, and health education.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW, OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

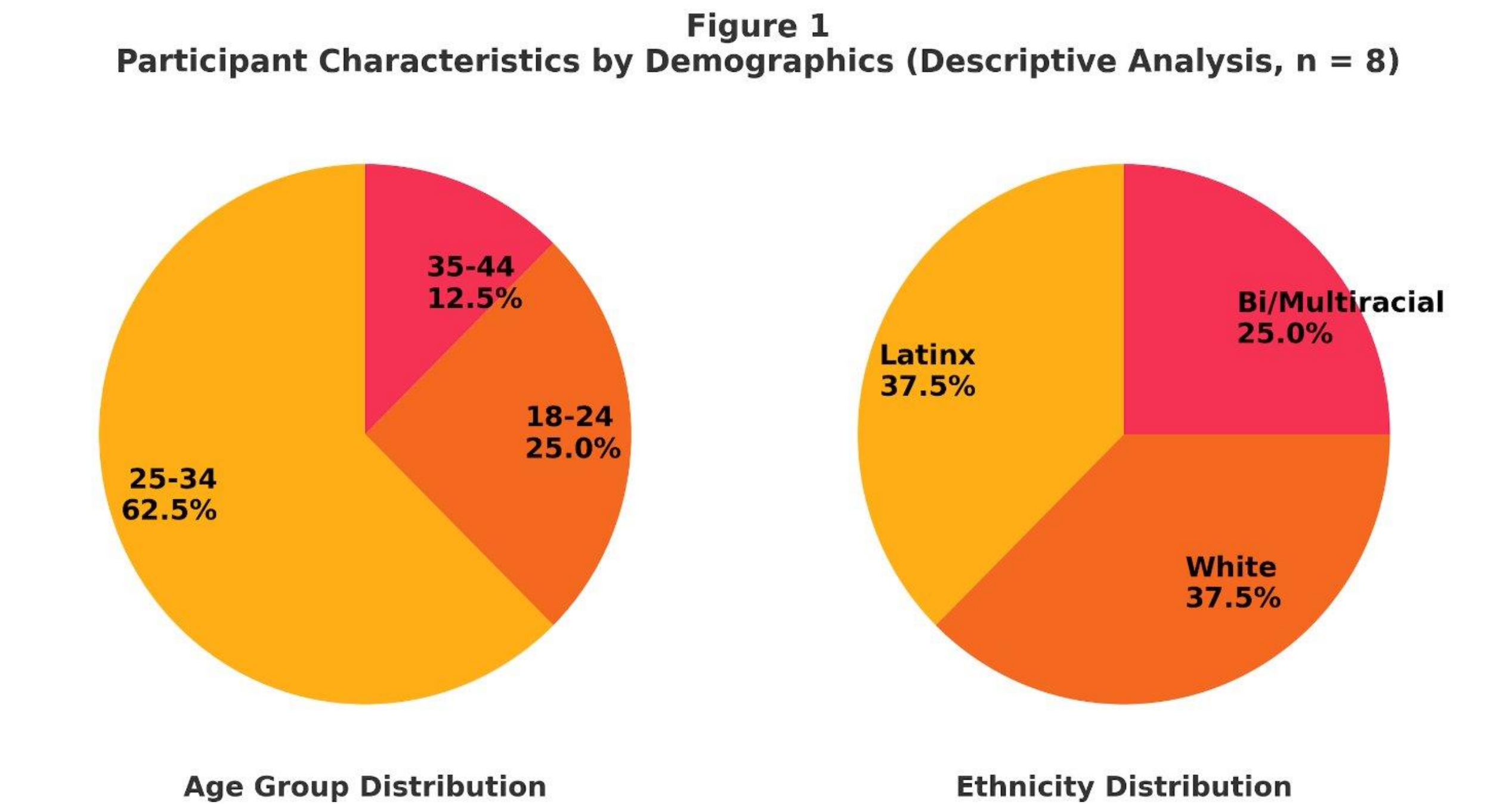


\*Ellis-Rios et al., 2015. \*\*Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services [LBDHHS], 2020

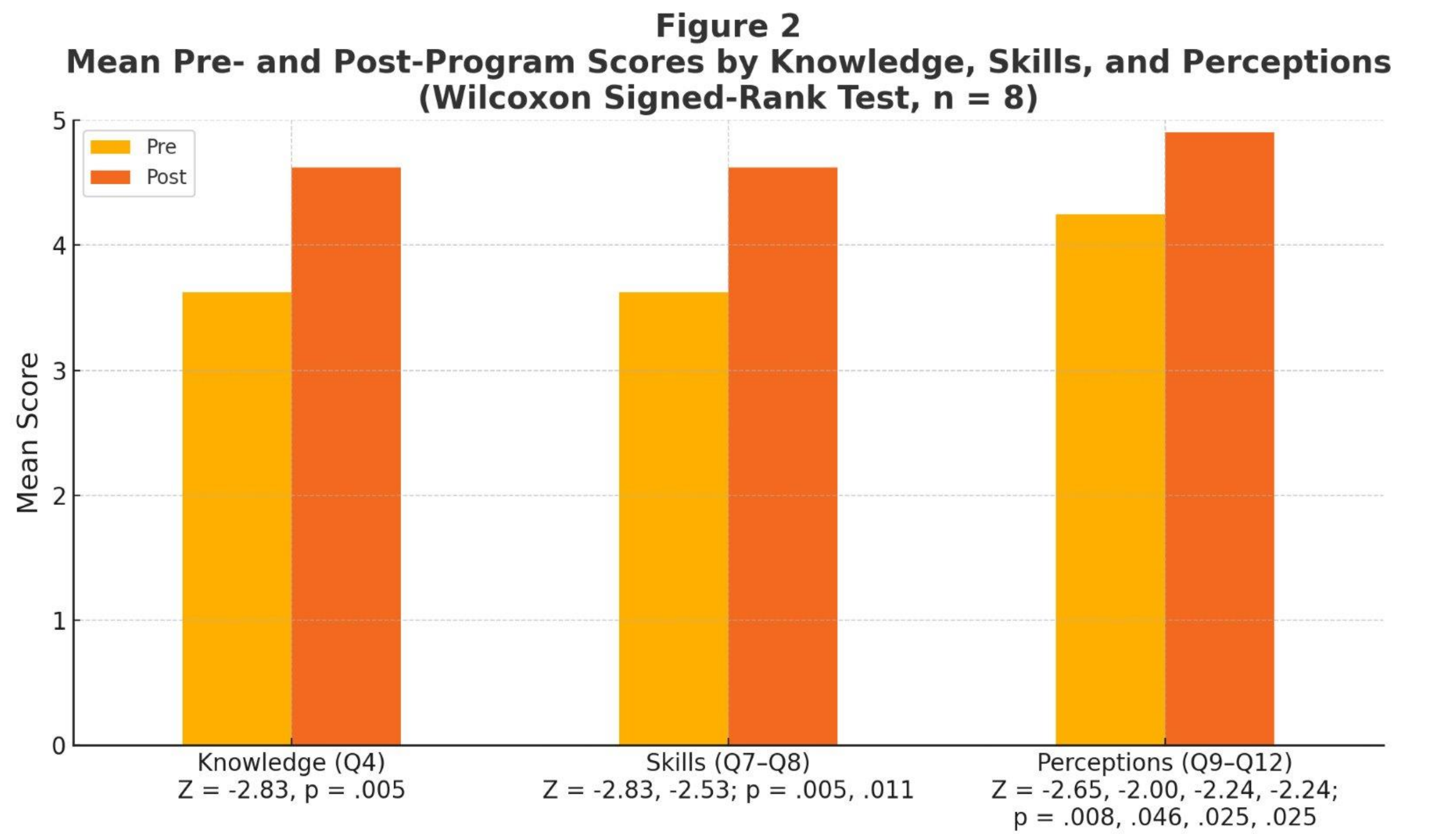
## METHODS

Our group, along with our community partner conducted outreach and engagement. The LGBTQ Center displayed our group flyers on their televisions within the center as well as in their activity room. The clinic manager and each group member shared the flyer with their professional network as well as on social media platforms. A QR code on the flyer was used to track participants for the workshop. In total eight individuals from Long Beach (90802) completed both pre and post intervention surveys. Please see Figure 1 for demographics. Pre- and post-surveys assessed HIV knowledge (Q4), skills/confidence (Q7-Q8), and attitudes (Q9-Q12) using 5-point Likert scales. Q5 and Q6 were excluded due to low variability and relevance. Responses were matched by participant ID and analyzed in SPSS (v20). Composite scores were averaged by domain. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to compare pre/post scores due to small sample size and ordinal data.

## RESULTS



**Figure 1** displays the percentages the distribution of participants by age group and ethnicity. Majority of participants were within the 25-34 age group and Latinx individuals made up the largest ethnic group.



**Figure 2.** Note . Z and p-values reflect Wilcoxon signed-rank test results for each domain. All domains showed statically significant improvements from pre-to post- intervention (p<.05).

The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to compare pre/post scores. The intervention resulted in statistically significant improvements across all measured domains.

Participants showed **increased HIV-related knowledge** (Z=-2.83 , p=.005), an **increase in self-reported skills** (Z=-2.83, p=.005 for Q7; Z= -2.53, p=.011 for Q8) , and **more favorable perceptions** (Z values ranging from –2.00 to –2.65, all p< .05) following participation in the workshop.

## RESOURCES

Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services [LBDHHS]. (2024). *STD/HIV monitoring reports*. Retrieved October 17, 2024, from <https://www.longbeach.gov/health/data-planning-and-research/std-hiv-reports>

\*\*Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services [LBDHHS]., 2020. Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services [LBDHHS]. (2020). *Table 3: Number and rate per 100,000 of new HIV infections by year, Long Beach 2020-2022*. STI/HIV surveillance annual report 2022. Retrieved April 18, 2025, from

\*Rios-Ellis, B., Becker, D., Espinoza, L., Nguyen-Rodriguez, S., Diaz, G., Carricchi, A., Galvez, G., & Garcia, M. (2015). Evaluation of a Community Health Worker Intervention to Reduce HIV/AIDS Stigma and Increase HIV Testing among Underserved Latinos in the Southwestern U.S. *Public Health Reports*, 130(5), 458–467.

## CONCLUSION

### Analysis of Findings

Our evaluation of pre- and post- surveys scores reveal significant decrease in attitudes which are stigmatizing towards HIV and an increase in HIV knowledge. Findings from this intervention show a successful reduction in HIV stigma among participants and increased readiness for HIV prevention and care engagement. There is strong potential for this workshop to be used as a beneficial approach for engaging a culturally competent conversation about HIV stigma, leading to further community support and linkage to resources for access to care.

### Limitations & Improvements

The study is limited to short-term stigma outcomes and does not assess long-term impact on sexual health behaviors. Another limitation in the study is that the evaluation does not include intersectionality of multiple forms of stigma within the context of HIV. To improve the project, a suggestion is to assess the effectiveness of workshop if done virtually and in series.

### Recommendations & Implications

#### Practice

- A recommendation in practice is to provide peer-led training for providers to handle HIV-related issues without furthering stigma to promotes safe spaces in healthcare.

#### Policy

- A policy to increase city funding for peer-led HIV education workshops in high-incidence zip codes that alleviate medical costs at a city level.

#### Research

- A recommendation in research for HIV stigma is to consider longitudinal studies of peer interventions to identify potential long-term effects of HIV reduction interventions that influence curriculum for community medical approaches.

## COMMUNITY PARTNER



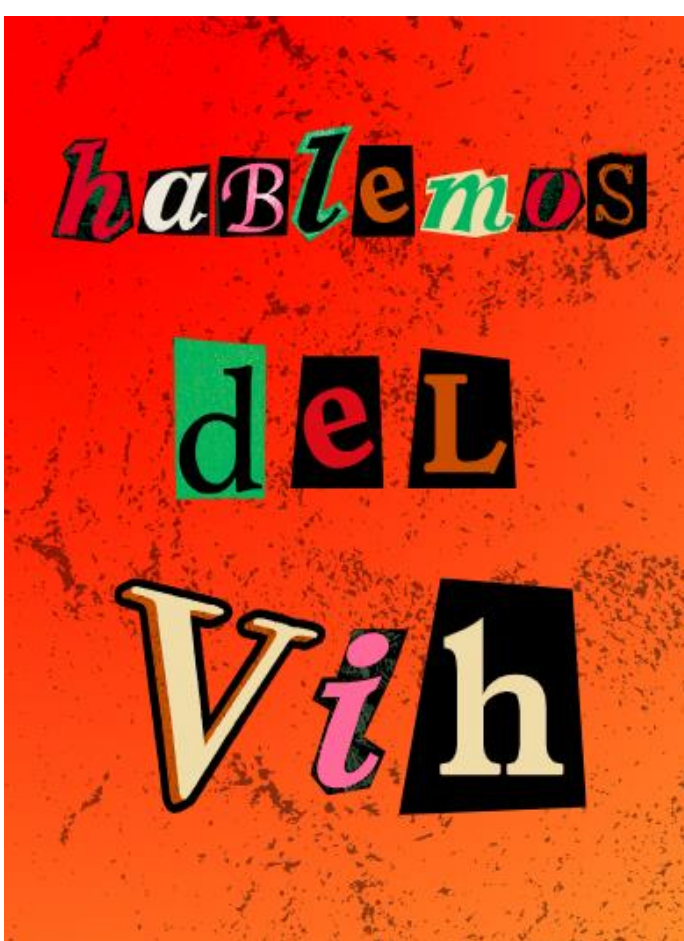
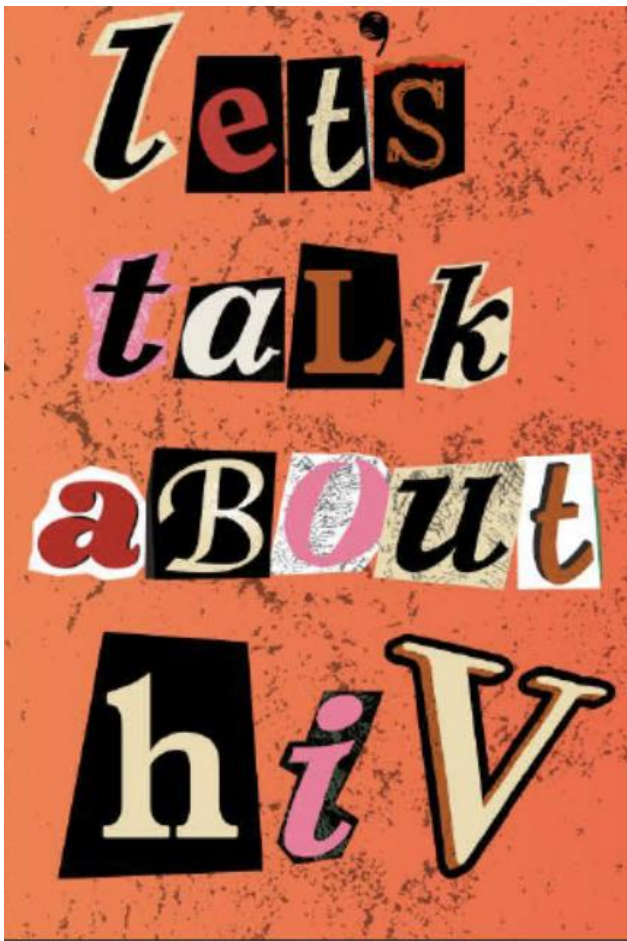
### The LGBTQ Center Long Beach

The LGBTQ Center Long Beach is dedicated to advancing equity for LGBTQ people through culturally responsive advocacy, education, programs, and services. Our vision is to achieve fully affirming communities where all LGBTQ people live in health, wellness, safety, and prosperity.

Name of Collaborator	Contributions
Rebecca Ruiz Credentials MPH Clinic Manager ruiz@centerlb.org	Assisted with participant engagement, outreach, and providing workshop space.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank those who donated to our fundraiser to help fund this workshop/event. We would also like to thank our community partner for partnering and supporting the implementation of our workshop.



Scan QR code for a digital zine

