

# HIV PREVENTION RESEARCH UNIT

## STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING COMMUNITIES IN MICROBICIDE RESEARCH: EXPERIENCES, ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

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South African Medical Research Council

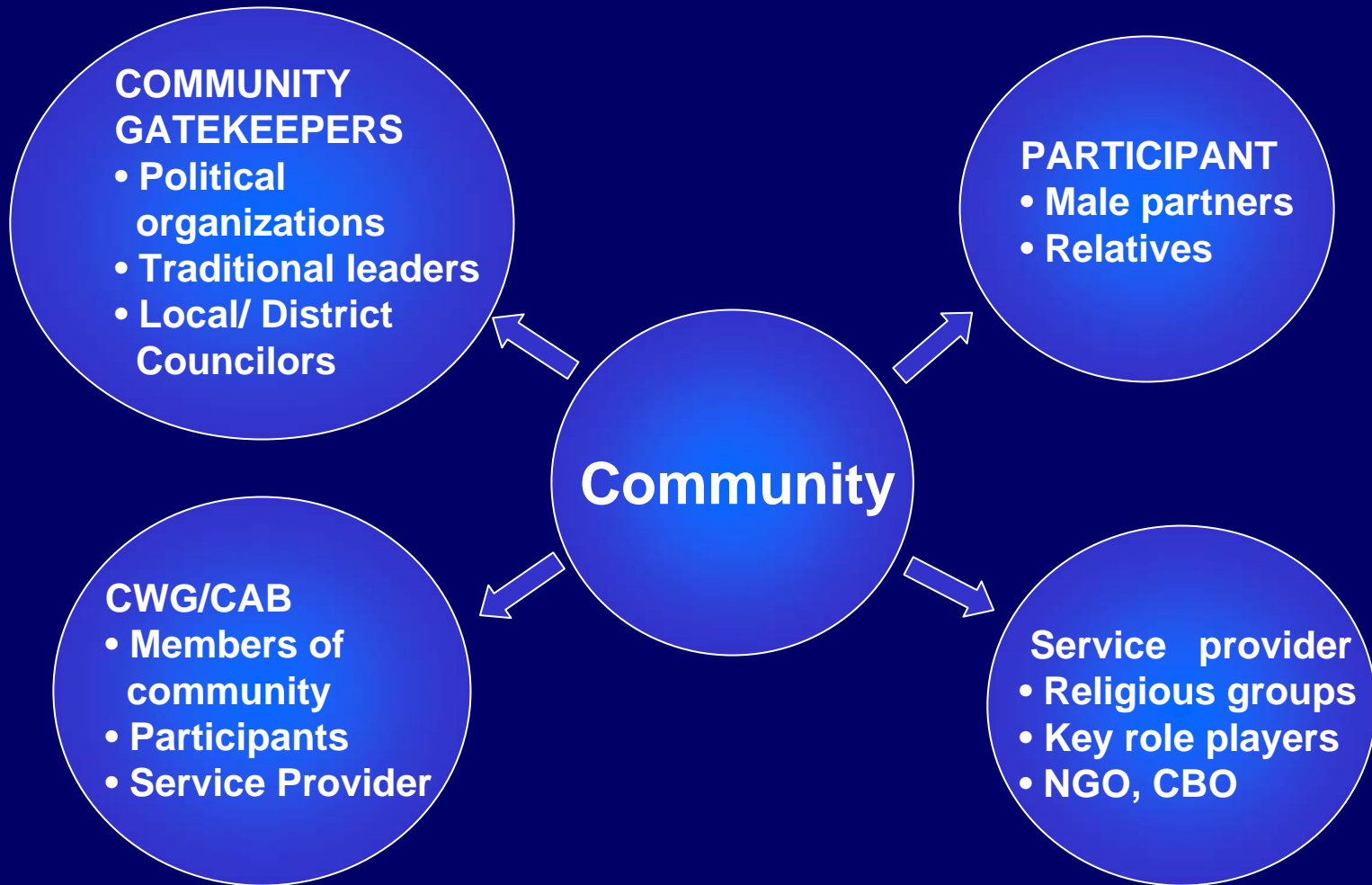
BUILDING A HEALTHY NATION THROUGH RESEARCH



# DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNITY



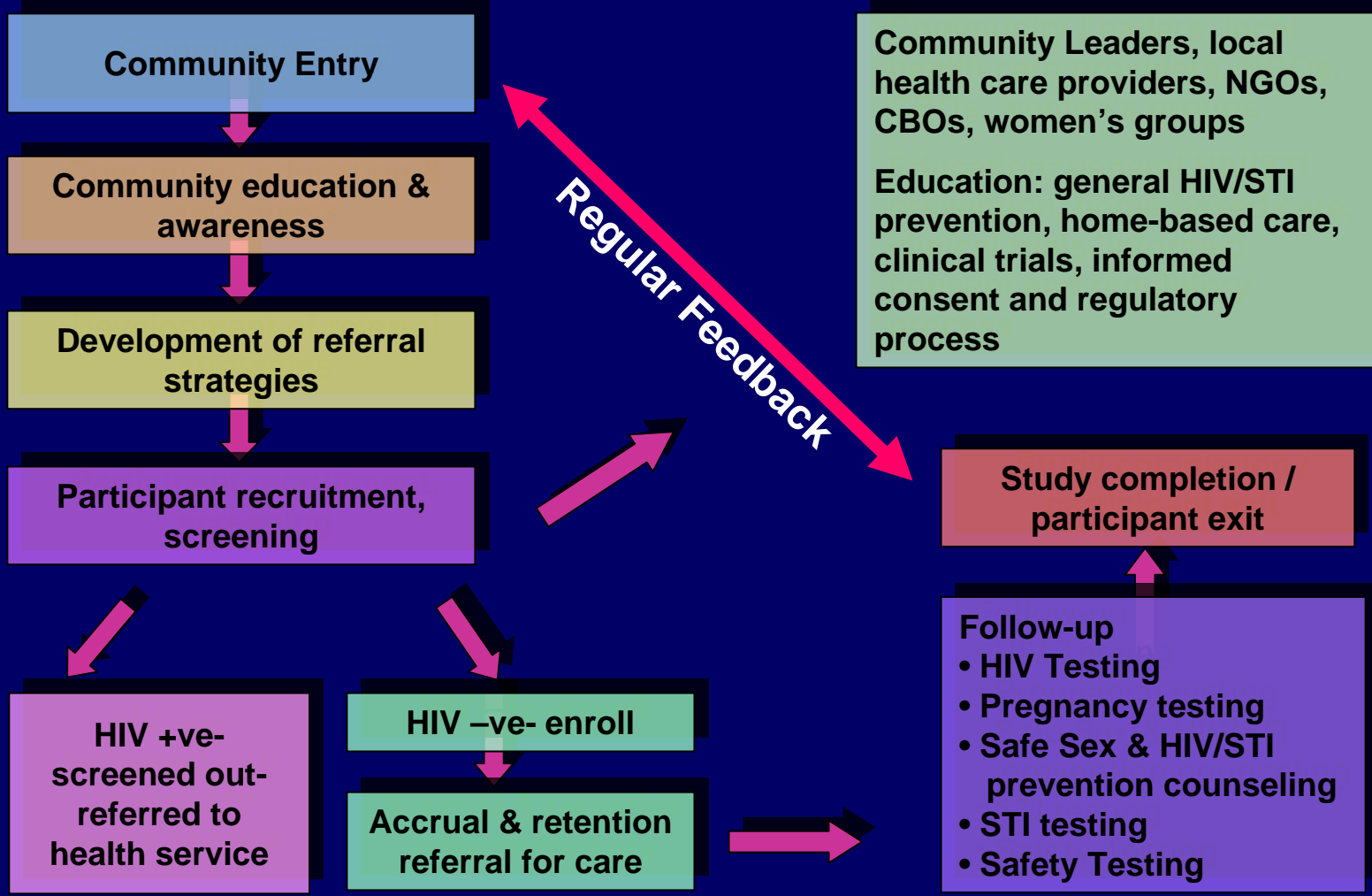
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# COMMUNITY ROLE IN RESEARCH PROCESS



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# EXPERIENCES



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## Communication with community gatekeepers is vital:

- **Community entry**
- **Study approval and implementation**
- **Recruitment, retention and study close-out**
- **Results dissemination**
- **Study status update from PI with community stakeholders, DOH, NHREC**

# EXPERIENCES



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## Education

- **HIV/AIDS: based on identified community needs**
- **Capacity build community members on basic counseling on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and home based care**
- **Train CWG/CAB members on responsibilities of investigators, ethics and human subjects training**
- **Protocol training: input from community on informed consent document and study procedure**
- **Respect the cultural norms and values of the community**



## Peer Educators

- **Develop volunteers as peer educators and trainers**
  - **Protocol training**
  - **Recruitment and retention requirements**
  - **Results translation and dissemination**

# EXPERIENCES



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## Trial results dissemination:

- **Update community on clinical trial outcomes regularly**
- **Results outcome and methods of dissemination discussed with community**
- **Assist community members to address rumors/misinformation**

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS



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- **Sustained relationships with various stakeholders**
- **Development of sustainable health referral systems with the community for HIV positive screened out women, HIV seroconvertors and for reproductive health care**
- **Trained Peer educators are a resource to the community who provide basic counseling and HIV/AIDS information**
- **Well educated and empowered CWG/CAB who provide ongoing HIV/AIDS education**



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS



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- **Male involvement programmes with the community where partners of women come forward for HIV/STI testing**
- **Traditional leaders - partnerships with HPRU to encourage male involvement in HIV prevention efforts**
- **Media and communication plan in place for trial results dissemination involving community members**

# LESSONS LEARNED



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- **Respect for community cultural norms and acceptance of traditional values in the research process**
- **Regular and ongoing communication with key role-players from investigators/PI**
- **Update community on results/outcome to avoid concerns due to sensationalism in media reports**
- **Address ethical concerns with transparency and honesty**



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# CONCLUSION



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- **Transparent and honest community partnership is key to success of clinical trials**
- **Involve community members from protocol development to dissemination of results**
- **Respect cultural norms and traditions**
- **Assist and participate in community programs- enhance relationships and to use opportunity to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS**
- **Mutual trusting relationship is important for any community based intervention**