



Structural Modifications Allowing for Efficient Implementation of Routine Opt-Out Testing in Community Health Settings

Maurice S. Chapman
Amanda Lengsouthiphong

Austin Health Center of Cook County, Chicago IL

Introduction

The CBC Initiative HIV primary program was created in 1999 in response to high rates of HIV infection and the lack of HIV primary care services on Chicago's west side. The program is co-located within the Austin Health Center. Austin Health Center is part of the Cook County Health and Hospital System (CCHHS). In 2011 the CBC Initiative implemented a new HIV testing program to routinely test Austin Clinic patients. This included offering all eligible patients HIV testing in accordance with CDC's 2006 recommendation. In June 2011, the CCHHS added an electronic medical record pop-up to prompt providers to offer HIV testing to clients receiving laboratory services.



Figure 1 Broader strategy encourages community members to at least learn their HIV status

Methods

To implement the County's new opt out testing policy, CBC Austin staff met with key stakeholders to obtain buy in including administrative and medical leadership. To increase awareness of the HIV testing services and walk-in clients, we also provided HIV testing at the local Department of Human Services (DHS) and utilized HIV positive peers to recruit community residents as walk-in HIV testing clients. Walk in clients received a rapid HIV test from CBC staff and registered clinic patients received HIV tests as part of laboratory services. Within the clinic setting, the lab tech played a major role, serving as a "safety net", where a pop up message reminded the lab tech that the patient has no HIV test results in the database in the last two years. This allowed the lab tech to offer a conventional HIV test if one was not ordered by the medical provider.



Figure 2. Clinic walk-in patients received rapid HIV tests, registered clinic patients were offered blood draws by medical provider or lab technician.



Figure 3. Outreach worker offering HIV screening at the local Department of Human Services (DHS) office. Nearly half on newly diagnosed individuals were identified at DHS.

Be Aware-Show You Care (BASYC) Goals

- Ensure that all health center adults between the ages 13 – 64 have, at least, one HIV test this year.
- Reduce late HIV diagnoses
- Reduce community stigma
- Emphasize personal empowerment by knowing one's HIV status
- Promote routine opt-out testing in various settings
- Share best practices



Figure 4. Routine HIV testing in clinical environments was a major focus during African American HIV Awareness Day, February 7, 2011

Results

- Increased HIV testing rate from 7% to 30% of all patients receiving lab work
- Created Routine Testing Videos for Providers and Patients
- Successfully established a regular presence at the DHS site
- Achieved 100% Linkage to Care Rate

- 3893 tested
- 13 positives
- 10 new, 3 previously diagnosed
- 100% LTC

Positives Demographics:

31% female Median age 50.5
69% male Median age 32
44% of males were MSM under age 26

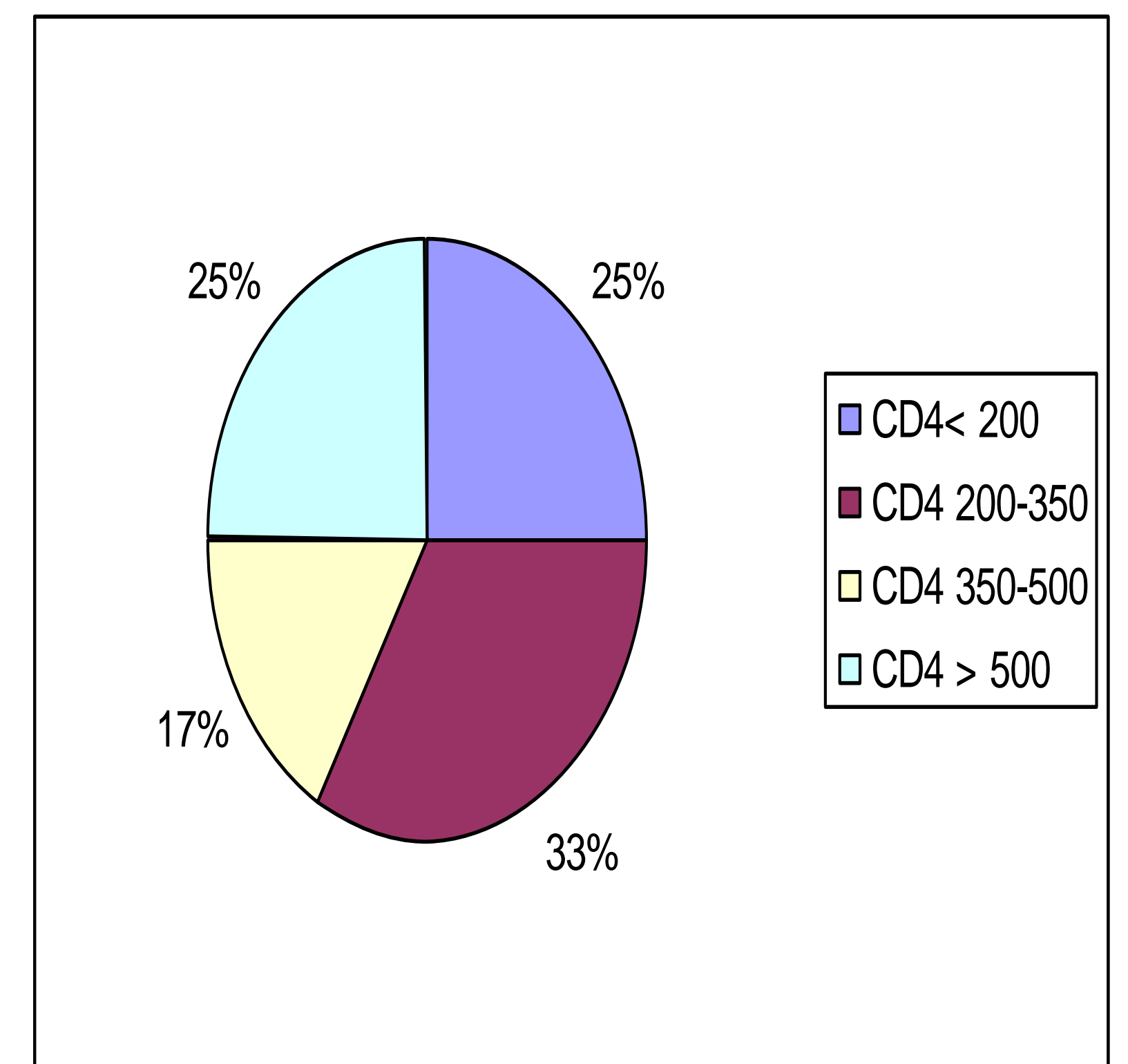


Figure 5. More than half of newly diagnosed HIV patients had CD4 counts lower than 350.

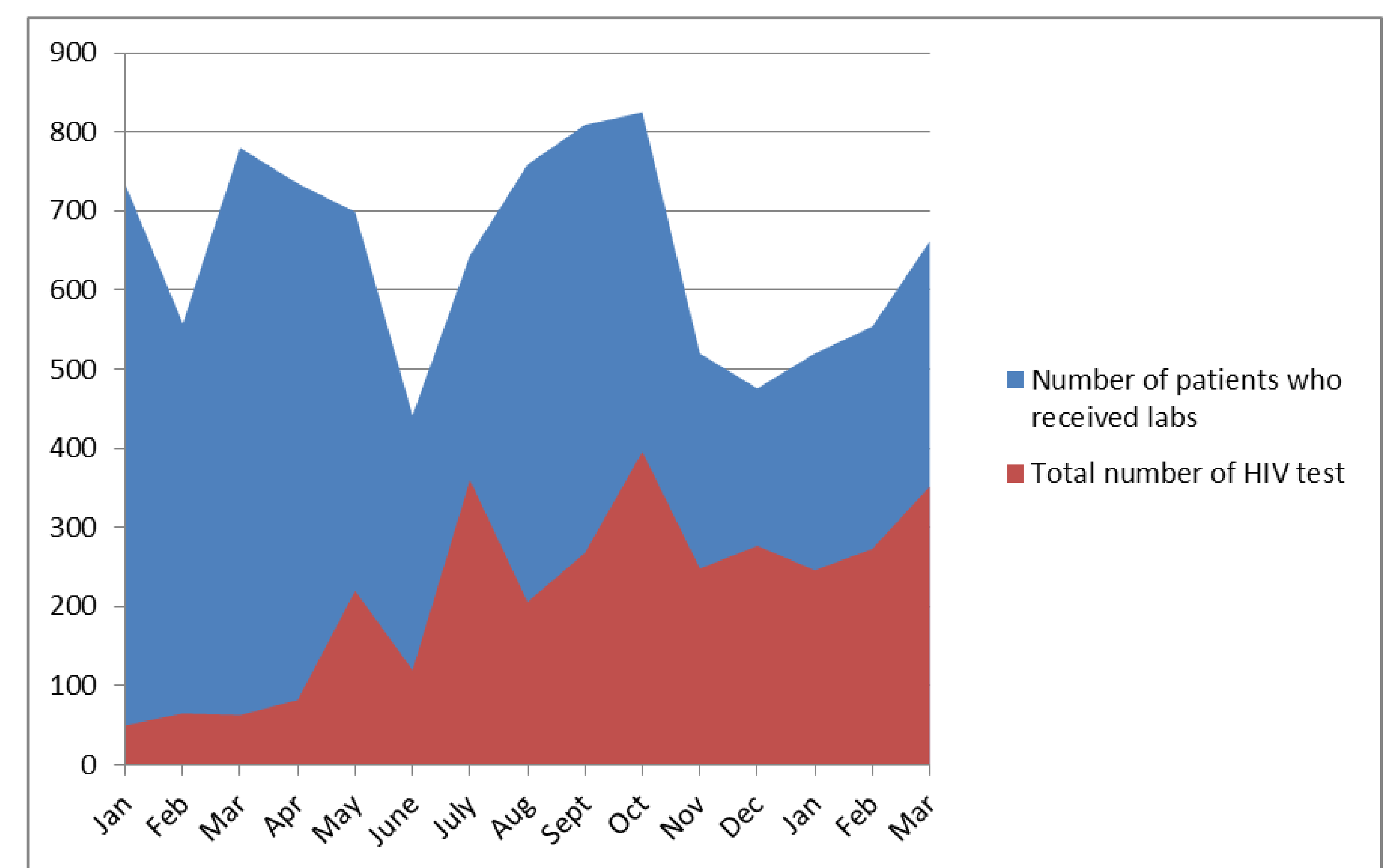


Figure 6. Significant efforts were made to decrease the number of missed opportunities with patients receiving lab services which increased results over time.

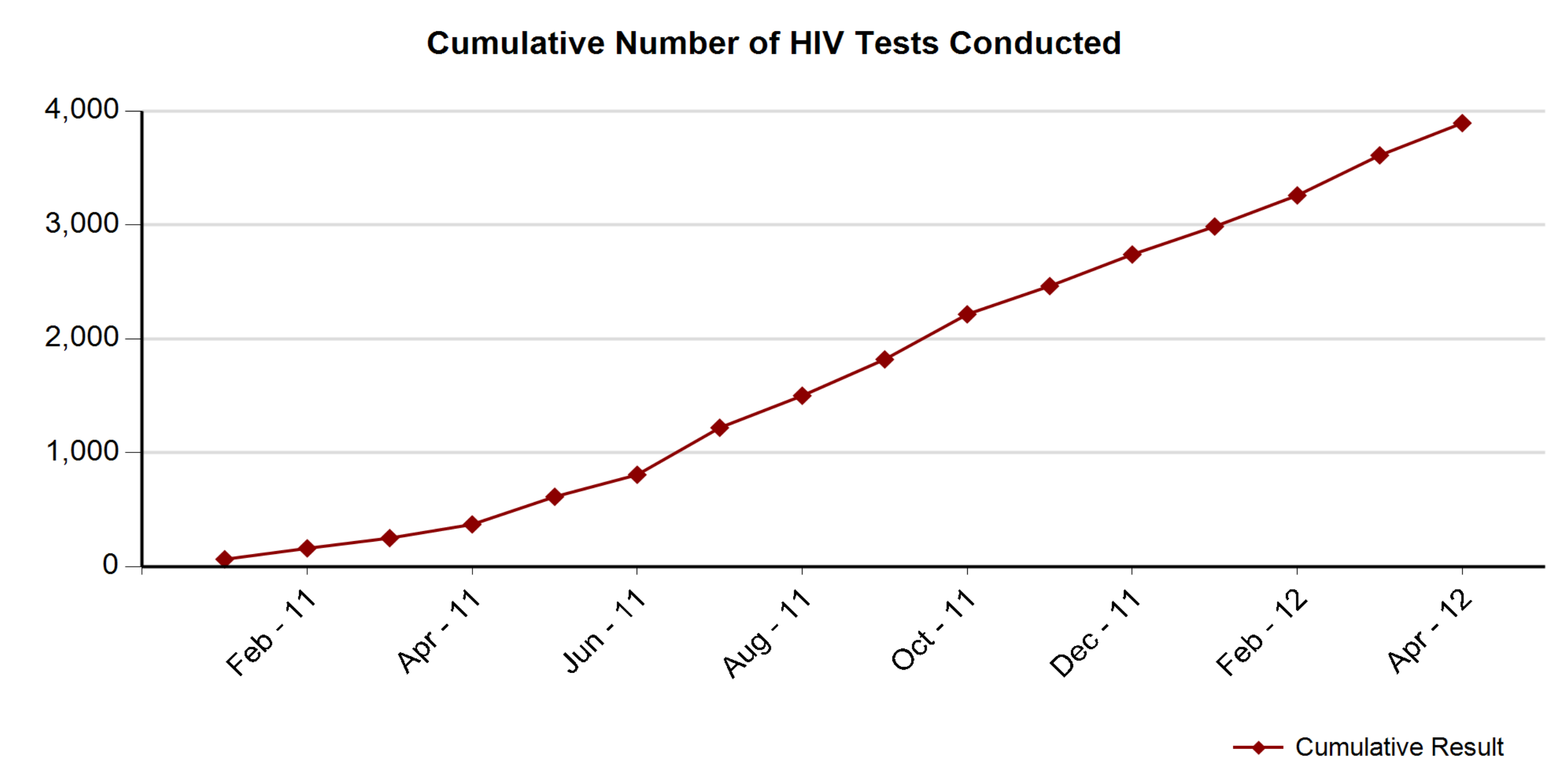


Figure 7. 3,897 HIV tests were conducted in first year, 13 positives, and 100% linkage to care rate.

Conclusions

- Making structural changes to support implementation of opt-out testing in community health centers is a cost effective method to identify undiagnosed HIV positive individuals.
- HIV Testing in the Department of Human Services settings is an effective method to identify both undiagnosed HIV positive individuals and those who are previously diagnosed but not in care.
- Implementing HIV screening must include continuous training for every staff person in the clinic from the security guard to the medical providers.
- Monitoring results and providing continuous feedback to staff is essential to make program modifications as needed.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to all Austin Health Center of Cook County and CBC staff members.
Thanks to all who participated in creating the videos.
Thank you to all of the support staff at Hektoen, LLC.
Thanks to Karl Productions, Inc.

Generous support for this work provided by *Gilead Science's HIV FOCUS* project.

For additional information or copies of the Routine HIV Testing videos designed for patients or providers, please contact maurice.chapman@hektoen.org.