

# Barriers and Facilitators to HIV and Hepatitis C Testing among Active Intravenous Drug Users

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# Objective

- \* We explored perceived barriers and facilitators to HIV and HCV testing among IDUs utilizing a community-based needle exchange program.
- \* We used the results to construct a conceptual model to help inform future interventions.

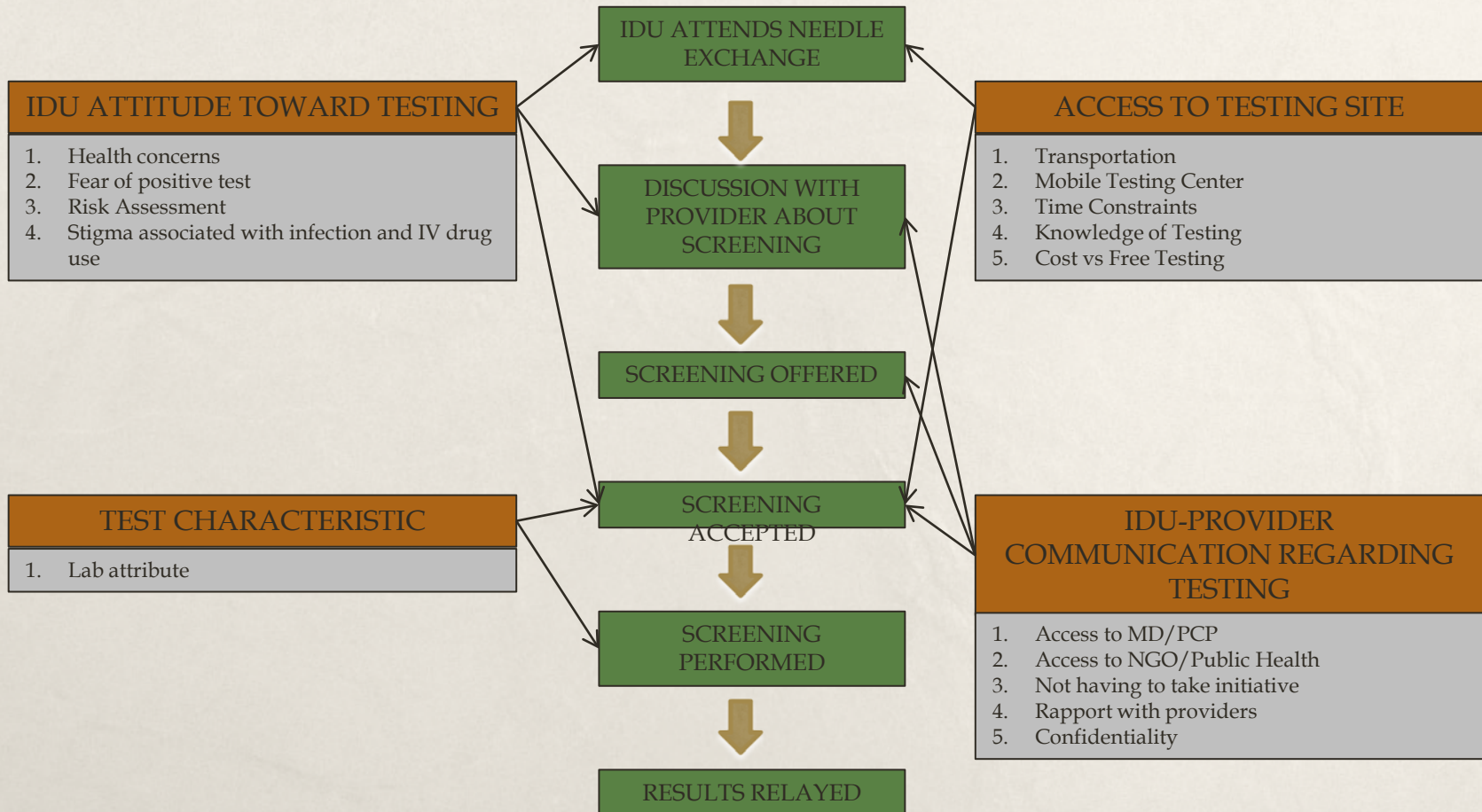
# Methods

- \* Oral interviews with 553 active IDUs utilizing free needle exchange throughout southern Wisconsin
- \* Questions developed from health belief model
  - \* What makes it harder for you to get tested for HIV/HCV?
  - \* What makes it easier for you to get tested for HIV/HCV?
- \* Inductive thematic analysis to code responses
- \* Themes determined by consensus with 81% agreement



# Participant Demographics

- \* Primarily young, white males
- \* Most injected drugs more than once daily, everyday
- \* 54% had active HCV infection
- \* 30% had not been tested for HCV in the past year
- \* 23% had not been tested for HIV in the past year

# Factors Associated with HIV and HCV Screening in IDUs



# Main Barriers and Facilitators

	HIV	HCV
<b>Most commonly mentioned barriers</b> 	1. Lack of transportation 2. Fear of positive test 3. Lack of time 4. Cost/ lack of medical insurance	1. Lack of transportation 2. Lack of time 3. Cost/ lack of health insurance 4. Lack of knowledge regarding testing 
<b>Most commonly mentioned facilitators</b>	1. Access to NGO 2. Health concerns 3. Access to free testing 4. Access to transportation	1. Access to NGO 2. Access to free testing 3. Health concerns 4. Access to transportation

# Conclusions

- \* Most barriers to testing were related to access (i.e, transportation, time constraints)
  - \* Fear was more of a barrier in HIV than HCV testing
  - \* Lack of knowledge was more a barrier in HCV than HIV testing
- \* Most facilitators centered around free and convenient testing
  - \* Health concerns of self and others was a main facilitator
- \* Expanding free, rapid, and mobile testing among primary care, public health, and NGOs may improve rates
- \* Future tailored education interventions focused on reducing fear of HIV and outlining the health benefits of HCV screening may be beneficial