



Divergent Perspectives about the Scientific Underpinnings of U=U among PLHIV and HIV-Negative Individuals

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Background

Clinical evidence has established the Undetectable equals Untransmittable (U=U) message as scientifically sound. People living with HIV who have an undetectable viral load have zero risk of transmitting HIV to their sexual partner(s).

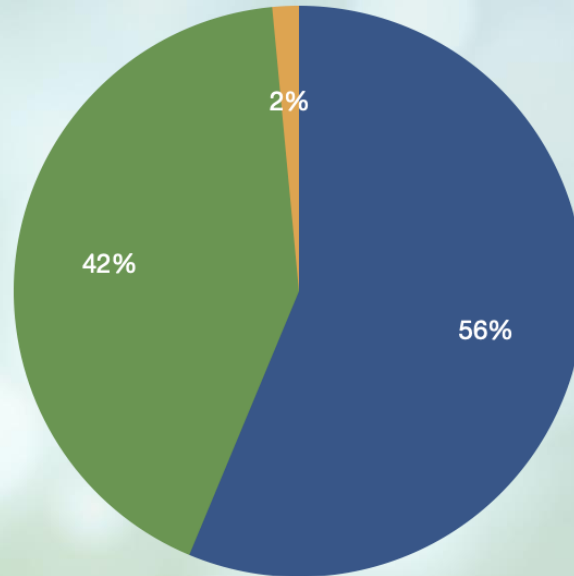
Method

A 6-question online survey was fielded among both PLHIV and HIV-negative individuals from March to May 2024 to assess community understanding and belief in U=U and WHO's Zero risk assertion. The survey was distributed through organizational partners and social media.



Results

● PLHIV (n=412) ● HIV-Negative (n=309) ● Prefer Not to Say (n=11)

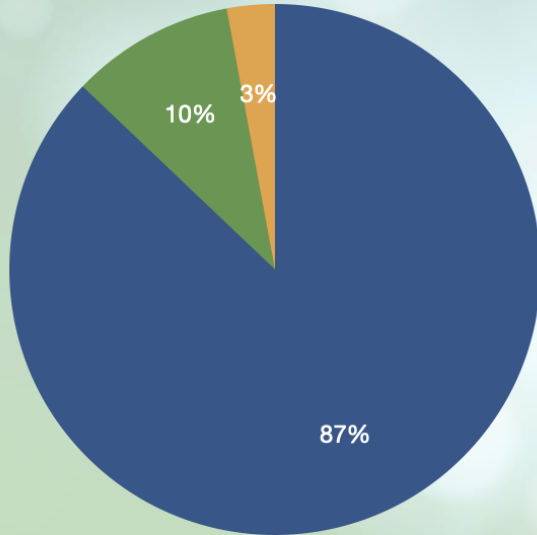


N=732



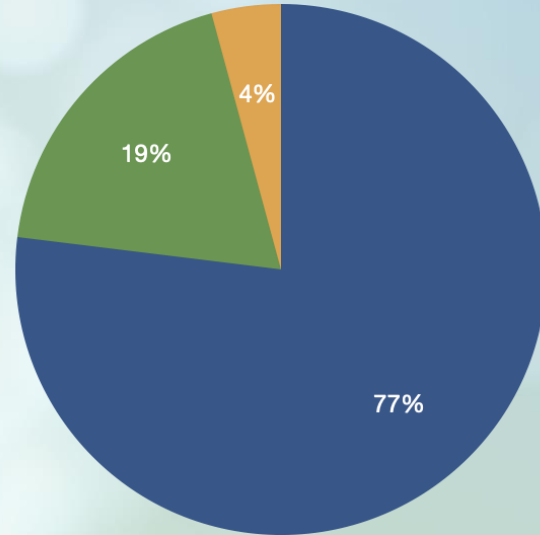
Results – Confidence in knowledge of U=U

● Confident ● Somewhat Confident ● Not Confident



PLHIV
(n=411)

● Confident ● Somewhat Confident ● Not Confident

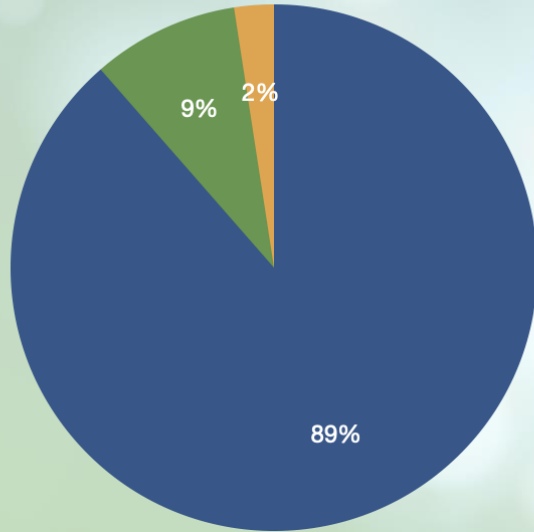


HIV-Negative
(n=309)



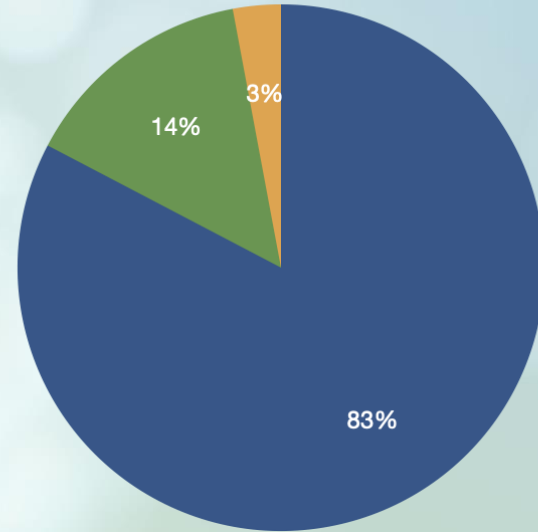
Results – Trust of U=U Science

● Trust the Science ● Unsure ● Do Not Trust the Science



PLHIV
(n=411)

● Trust the Science ● Unsure ● Do Not Trust the Science

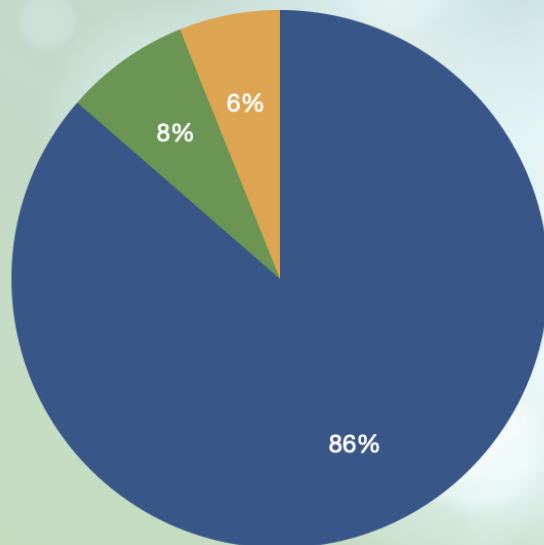


HIV-Negative
(n=307)



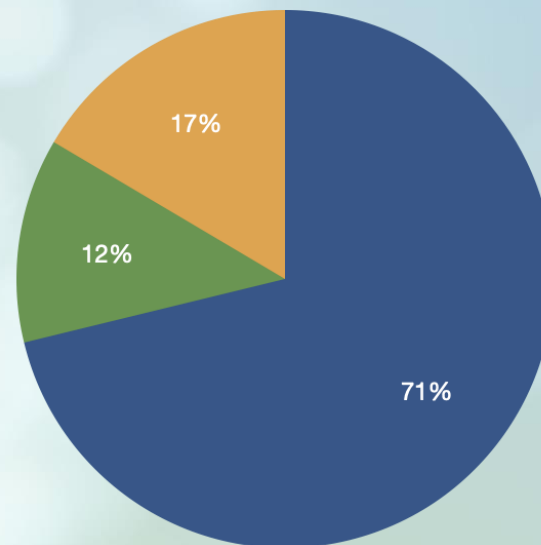
Results – Belief in assertion of Zero Risk

● Yes ● No ● Unsure



PLHIV
(n=411)

● Yes ● No ● Unsure

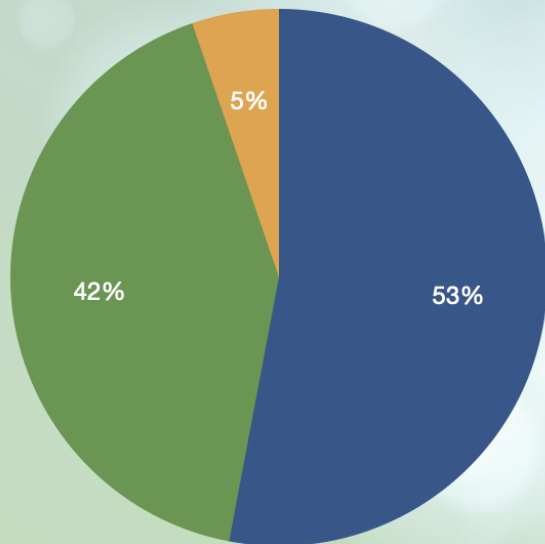


HIV-Negative
(n=310)



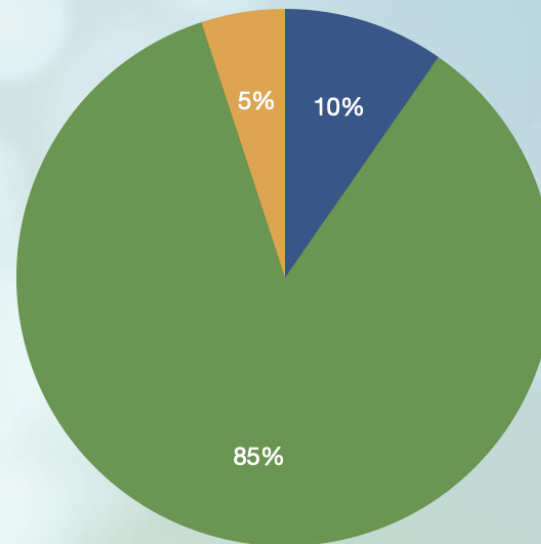
Results

● Yes ● No ● Prefer Not to Say



Provider Discussions of U=U
(n=707)

● Yes ● No ● Not Sure



Public Awareness of U=U
(n=707)



Conclusion

Overall PLHIV reported slightly higher U=U knowledge and trust in U=U science compared to HIV-negative individuals. The majority of respondents, irrespective of HIV-status, agreed that public knowledge on the scientifically backed U=U messaging is lacking. Considering the limitations of distributing the survey through organizational partners, it is likely that respondents were more knowledgeable about U=U.

Improving public knowledge and promoting broader acceptance of U=U is not only critical sexual health knowledge, but has the potential to mitigate stigma experienced by PLHIV.