POSTER PRESENTATION
THE 30TH ANNUAL CANADIAN CONFERENCE ON HIV/AIDS RESEARCH
(CAHR 2021 VIRTUAL)
THE CARE COLLECTIVE

A groundbreaking campaign whose objective is to encourage African, Caribbean and Black (ACB) women to know their HIV status by incorporating regular testing into their radical self-care practice. The campaign also increases HIV knowledge and chips away at HIV-related stigma.

The campaign is sparking conversations around HIV by accessing self-care spaces (including virtual ones) where ACB women gather, and by bringing certified HIV testers to these self-care spaces to talk about HIV and offer free and confidential testing on site.
African, Caribbean and Black (ACB) people make up 4.7% of Ontario’s population, yet they account for 27% of first-time HIV diagnoses. HIV testing, rates of infection, engagement and retention in care are all areas in which ACB women are being perilously left behind. 61% of all women newly diagnosed with HIV in Ontario are ACB women, and these numbers are expected to rise (OHESI). These numbers highlight the dangerous interplay between health outcomes and social determinants of health, including anti-Black racism. The Care Collective is responding to this reality by promoting radical self-care for ACB women, which includes regular HIV testing.

ACB women traditionally bear a disproportionate burden as care givers and supporters of their households and families, as backbones of their communities, and as activists speaking up against oppression – hence the stereotype of the ‘strong’ Black woman. For these reasons, the concept of radical self-care resonates loudly with ACB women.
The Care Collective was launched on February 7th, 2020 – ACB HIV/AIDS Awareness Day – through two pop up Care Salons in Toronto-area hair salons. It was a great success with unprecedented media interest.

- Reached over 10 million people across digital & traditional media
- Promotional video had over 430,000 views
- Was the headline of 9 media placements in one day
- More than 10 participants presented for testing
- 3,095 web page visits
- 24 -35 was the most active age audience
- Close to a dozen women presented for testing
The Care Collective is being implemented through a collection of radical self-care inspired initiatives, bringing HIV testing and conversations to new and existing virtual and in-house spaces where ACB women gather such as: beauty salons, yoga studios, gyms, mindfulness groups, faith group gatherings, professional associations, etc.

Some The Care Collective events:

The self-care universe is large and ever-expanding and will inspire more initiatives as this campaign continues to be rolled out.