

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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NAME: Sonjia Kenya, Ed.D., M.S., M.A.

eRA COMMONS USER NAME (credential, e.g., agency login): sonjiakenya

POSITION TITLE: Associate Professor of Medicine; Director of Community Health Programs

EDUCATION/TRAINING (*Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.*)

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE (if applicable)	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)	B.A.	06/1995	African American Studies
Columbia University, Teachers College, New York	M.A.	10/1997	Health & Human Behavior
Columbia University, Teachers College, New York	M.S.	10/2000	Health Education
Columbia University, Teachers College, New York	Ed.D.	06/2002	Health Education
Columbia University School of Physicians and Surgeons, New York	Post-Doc	2004	HIV Clinical Research

A. Personal Statement

My research initiatives as an Associate Professor at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (UM) build upon my considerable experience in delivering CHW-facilitated HIV care to the heart of Miami's Black communities. My primary research interest is reducing HIV disparities among minority populations and I currently lead one of the largest street-based rapid HIV testing programs in the County. For over a decade, my HIV research has relied on community health workers (CHW) for implementation and we have established numerous partnerships with local stakeholders and community-based organizations within Miami's historically Black neighborhoods, specifically in areas with the highest HIV prevalence. My prior CHW studies focused on developing culturally-tailored strategies to improve HAART adherence and reduce behavioral risks that contribute to medication nonadherence among Black people living with HIV. I have greatly benefited from 13 years of academic collaboration at UM and work closely with several distinguished HIV and translational science researchers from our Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI), Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) and Developmental Center for HIV and Research on Mental Health (CHARM). My combined experience as a health disparities researcher, HIV service provider, and long-term community-based partner are important strengths I bring to collaborative projects.

- a. **Kenya S.**, Jones J, Arheart K, Kobetz E, Chida N, Baer S, Powell A, Symes S, Hunte T, Monroe A, Carrasquillo O. Using community health workers to improve clinical outcomes among people living with HIV: a randomized controlled trial. *AIDS and Behavior*. 2013;17(9):2927-34.
- b. Young B, Rosenthal A, Escarfuller S, Shah S, Carrasquillo O, **Kenya S.** Beyond the Barefoot Doctors: Using Community Health Workers to Translate HIV Research to Service. *AIDS and Behavior*. 2019 Oct 1;23(10):2879-88.
- c. **Kenya S.**, Okoro, I. S., Wallace, K., Ricciardi, M., Carrasquillo, O., & Prado, G. (2016). Can Home-Based HIV Rapid Testing Reduce HIV Disparities Among African Americans in Miami? *Health Promotion Practice*, 17(5), 722–730.
- d. **Kenya S.**, Okoro, I., Wallace, K., Carrasquillo, O., & Prado, G. (2015). Strategies to Improve HIV Testing in African Americans. *The Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care* : JANAC, 26(4), 357–367.

B. Positions and Honors

a. Positions & Employment

- 1999 – 2003 Assistant Professor of Health Education, City University of New York, New York, NY
- 2002 – 2004 Fellow, NIDDK Research Award, St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital, University Hospital of Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, NY
- 2004 – 2005 Research Associate, Department of Sociomedical Sciences, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, New York, NY
- 2005 – 2007 Assistant Professor of Public Health, St. Matthew's University School of Medicine, Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands
- 2007 – Pres Director, Community Health Programs, Jay Weiss Institute for Health Equity, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, Miami, FL
- 2008 – 2012 Assistant Research Professor, Family Medicine and Community Health, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, Miami, FL
- 2012 – 2016 Assistant Professor, General Medicine and Public Health Sciences, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
- 2016-Present Associate Professor, General Medicine and Public Health Sciences, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

b. Academic & Community Honors

- 1997 Fellow, Student Scholar, Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE)
- 2001 Fellow, Pre-doctoral Dissertation Award, Teachers College, Columbia University
- 2003 – 2007 Scholar -Fellow, Health Disparities Scholar Award: National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities: National Institutes of Health
- 2005 Fellow, Summer Research Career Development Institute, University of Pittsburgh's EXPORT Project in the Center for Minority Health
- 2006 HIV & Poverty Scholar, Development Gateway Communities: Internet for Developing Countries
- 2010 Miami Herald: Miami's 20 leaders Under 40 years old
- 2011 Ford Motor Company: Freedom Sister of South Florida
- 2013 Miami-Dade Women's Commission: Woman of the Year: Health and Human Services
- 2014 Legacy Miami: South Florida's 25 Most Influential and Prominent Black Women in Business and Leadership
- 2016 Healthcare Miami Herald Legacy: Miami's top 25 Healthcare Leaders

C. Contributions to Science

Since joining the University of Miami, I have focused on translating clinic-based HIV care to community settings using CHW strategies. From 2008-2010, I conducted a randomized controlled pilot which found a CHW intervention could achieve viral load suppression among Blacks with uncontrolled HIV viral loads (≥ 1000 copies/ml). Participants were randomized to a CHW intervention or usual care for 12 months. Those randomized to CHWs experienced statistically significant decreases in HIV viral load, as compared to the control group. As background to that study, I published a review on the impact of CHW interventions on medication adherence among PLWH. In 2010-2011, I collaborated with UM's CFAR investigators to conduct a study using CHWs to examine alcohol use patterns and HAART adherence among PLWH in Miami. I found that 20% of the sample reported "weekending," a phenomenon of skipping HAART due to planned alcohol use and drinking more on the weekend. As HIV case management strategies inform CHW interventions, I collaborated with Lisa Metsch, a NIDA-funded investigator, to examine case management on clinical outcomes among HIV-infected African-American drug users. In 2012, I received a pilot award from the National Cancer Institute to conduct a CHW study addressing HIV knowledge among HIV positive Haitian Women. I also received a pilot award from the Miami Clinical and Translational Institute in 2013 to develop a randomized controlled pilot intervention on CHW-facilitated home-based rapid HIV testing (HBHRT). Experimental participants received CHW assistance to complete HBHRT and control group members were instructed to complete HBHRT independently. Those with CHW support were significantly more likely to complete HBHRT and, if positive, get linked to HIV care. Since then, I have focused on translating this research into practice with support from the Elton John AIDS Foundation and the Florida Department of Health. Today, this program has expanded into a publicly funded HIV clinic without walls that provides CHW-led HIV care in Miami's Historically Black communities.

- a. **Kenya S**, Carrasquillo O, Fatil M, Jones J, Jean C, Kobetz E. Human papilloma virus and cervical cancer education needs among HIV-positive Haitian women in Miami. *Women's Health Issues*. 2015;25(3):262.
- b. **Kenya S**, Chida N., Fatil, M., Jones, J., Cardenas, G., Pereyra, M., Del Rio, C., Rodriguez, A., Metsch, L. Case Management: Steadfast Resource for Addressing Linkage to Care and Prevention with Hospitalized HIV-Infected Crack Users. 2014 *J HIV AIDS Soc Serv*. 2014; 13(4): 325–326
- c. **Kenya S**, Chida N, Jones J, Alvarez G, Symes S, Kobetz E. Weekending in PLWH: alcohol use and ART adherence, a pilot study. *AIDS and Behavior*. 2013;17(1):61-7.
- d. **Kenya S**, Chida N, Symes S, Shor-Posner G. Can community health workers improve adherence to highly active antiretroviral therapy in the USA? A review of the literature. *HIV medicine*. 2011;12(9):525-34.

Though HIV is my primary focus, I am dedicated to improving health disparities for all vulnerable populations and have consistently engaged in transdisciplinary collaborations with my colleagues addressing non-HIV disparities. For example, I served as a key investigator on the NIMHDI R01-funded *Hispanic Secondary Stroke Prevention Initiative (HISSPI)*, which tested a CHW-led mobile-phone based intervention among 200 Latinos at risk for recurrent stroke. In addition to directing this intervention, I was senior author on the publication describing the design and rationale of this unique mobile health intervention. In preparation to carry out the proposed research, I was part of the collaborative team in designing and implementing this mHealth technology, giving my team a clearer understanding of the strategies needed to expand this service to other diverse communities.

- a. Carrasquillo O, Young B, Dang S, Fontan O, Ferras N, Romano JG, Dong C, **Kenya S**. Hispanic Secondary Stroke Prevention Initiative Design: Study Protocol and Rationale for a Randomized Controlled Trial. *JMIR research protocols*. 2018;7(10):e11083.
- b. Dang S, Sarhadi K, **Kenya S**, Dong C, Ferras N, Romano J, Carrasquillo O. Feasibility of Mobile Health for Low-Income Minority Hispanic Patients with a Stroke. *Innovation in Aging*. 2019 Nov;3(Suppl 1):S334.
- c. Lebron CN, Reyes-Arrechea E, Castillo A, Carrasquillo O, **Kenya S**. Tales from the Miami Healthy Heart Initiative: the experiences of two community health workers. *Journal of health care for the poor and underserved*. 2015;26(2):453-62.
- d. Carrasquillo O, Patberg E, Alonzo Y, Li H, **Kenya S**. Rationale and design of the Miami Healthy Heart Initiative: a randomized controlled study of a community health worker intervention among Latino patients with poorly controlled diabetes. *International journal of general medicine*. 2014;7:115.
- e. **Kenya S**, Lebron CN, Li H, Alonzo Y, Reyes E, Carrasquillo O. Sexual Dysfunction among Latino men and women with poorly controlled diabetes. *Journal of Health Disparities Research and Practice*. 2014;7(1):6.
- f. **Kenya S**, Lebron CN, Chang AY, Li H, Alonzo YA, Carrasquillo O. A profile of Latinos with poorly controlled diabetes in South Florida. *Journal of community hospital internal medicine perspectives*. 2015 Jan 1;5(2):26586.

D. Additional Information: Research Support and/or Scholastic Performance

Ongoing Research Support

- a. Title: Community-Based HIV Awareness among Minority Populations (CHAMP)
Source: Florida Department of Health
PI: Kenya 01/01/2019 - 12/31/2021
As a designated HIV testing site for the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County, CHAMP utilizes CHWs to provide Black populations in Miami with street-based rapid HIV testing and immediate linkage to treatment, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PREP). CHAMP also provides follow-up support with medication adherence and partners with local community organizations, including churches, to extend our reach in Black communities.
- b. Title: HIV Testing and Linkage to Care for Black Adults in Miami
Source: Gilead
PI: Kenya 10/31/2018 - 10/30/2020

This award supports CHW services to provide rapid HIV testing and linkage to care, using an on-call system. Potentially interested participants call the main research phone number to request CHW assistance completing an HIV test at their home, work, or other desired location. CHWs respond to such requests within 24 hours and provide testing services, pre-and post-HIV counseling, and when appropriate rapid linkage to HIV treatment or HIV prevention resources.

- c. Title: Increasing Uptake of Evidence Based Screening through a CHW-led multi-modality program
Source: National Institute on Minority Health Disparities
PI: Carrasquillo 05/19/2016 - 12/31/2020
This study tests a CHW led intervention using innovative, home based multi-modality preventive screening (HIV, Hepatitis C, colon cancer, cervical cancer) among medically underserved individuals.
- d. Title: Vanderbilt-Miami-Meharry Center of Excellence Precision Medicine and Population Health
Source: National Institute on Minority Health Disparities
PI: Carrasquillo, Wilkins (PI-Vanderbilt) 05/19/2016 - 03/31/2021
The Center brings together institutions and faculty in South East US with substantial expertise in precision medicine and health disparities research among African Americans and Latinos/Hispanics. The Center will leverage unique assets to develop novel methods and approaches to advance population health.

Completed Research

- e. Title: Community-Based HIV Awareness among Minority Populations (CHAMP)
Source: Elton John AIDS Foundation
PI: Kenya 11/01/2016 - 10/31/2018
The purpose of this award was to transition our CHW rapid HIV testing strategy from research to a service program. During this funding period, CHWs conducted HIV education on over 4000 Black people in Miami and completed rapid, street-based HIV testing among 1500 Black people in Miami. Among the approximately 3% that tested positive, CHWs facilitated immediate linkage to HIV treatment.
- f. Title: Hispanic Secondary Stroke Prevention Intervention (HISSPI)
Source: National Institute on Minority Health Disparities
PI: Carrasquillo 01/01/2015 - 12/31/2017
The goal of the Hispanic Secondary Stroke Prevention Initiative is to assess whether Community Health Workers (CHW) and mobile phone technologies can reduce the risk for a recurrent stroke among 300 Latino patients at high risk for a second and potentially much debilitating stroke.
- g. Title: Feasibility of home-based Rapid HIV Testing among African-Americans
Source: Clinical Translational Science Institute (CTSI)
PI: Kenya 01/01/2013 - 05/31/2014
The goal of this research is to determine whether community health workers paired with OraQuick, the first FDA approved rapid HIV home test, can be a feasible and acceptable alternative to clinic-based HIV screening amongst African-Americans residing in high risk communities in Miami. In phase one, focus groups with the target population were conducted to inform the intervention protocol. In phase two, 60 participants were enrolled into the randomized controlled intervention. A community health worker from the target community helped intervention participants complete the test and control participants were instructed to complete the test independently. Our analysis indicated that intervention participants were significantly more likely than control participants to complete the test, and if positive, get linked to HIV care.
- h. Title: Miami Heart Healthy Initiative
Source: National Institutes of Health
PI: Carrasquillo 01/3/2010 - 04/31/2014
This research will measure the effects of lay health workers addressing heart disease among Hispanic patients with diabetes in Miami, Florida. Our project aims to reduce racial disparities in diabetes and heart disease using a community-based model of care and we hypothesize that lay health workers will help patients achieve better health outcomes compared to current standards of care.
- i. Title: HPV Awareness Prevents Positive Infections (HAPPI)

Source : National Cancer Institute

PI : Kenya

10/01/2010 - 12/31/2013

The goal of this research is to develop and implement a culturally relevant educational intervention addressing HPV screening and cervical cancer risk among HIV positive Haitian women. Focus groups with HIV positive Haitian women will be conducted to determine culturally acceptable intervention strategies and messages. A community health worker from the target community will deliver the educational intervention through home-based visits and assessments will be conducted to determine the effects of the intervention on HPV screening behaviors.

j. Title: Narrative Therapy for Depressed Diabetics

Source: Shine a Light Narrative Therapy foundation

PI: Lewis/Co-PI: Kenya

08/01/2011 - 07/31/2011

This is a pilot study to determine whether narrative therapy is a feasible strategy to improve medical adherence and reduce depression among public health patients with unmanaged diabetes.

k. Title: Pilot Program to Reduce HIV Health Disparities in Overtown and Adjacent areas

Source: Jay Weiss Center for Social Medicine and Health Equity

PI: Kenya

01/01/2008 - 06/31/2011

The purpose of this research is to determine whether an established community-based model to reduce racial disparities in HIV infection is effective in underserved Miami neighborhoods. Modeled after the Prevention, Access, Care, and Treatment (PACT) program at Brigham and Women's hospital, the goal is to help patients learn how to independently manage their HIV infection and reduce complications linked to medical non-adherence.

l. Title: Natural History of Body Composition and Glucose Tolerance among Minority College Women

Source: NIDDK

PI: Kenya/Kotler/Heymsfield

09/01/2002 - 08/31/2004

The major goal of this project was to study racial differences in body fat, cardiovascular risk, and insulin resistance associated with HIV infection in minority women, as well as develop effective interventions that may reduce health complications experienced by the study population. The experimental design includes a culture-specific nutrition and exercise intervention aimed at delaying, and/or preventing the onset of obesity and/or type 2 diabetes in Black women, and assessment of the biologic effects of the intervention.

m. Title: Body Composition: Methods, Model, & Clinical Application

Source: NIDDK

PI: Heymsfield

07/01/2002 - 06/30/2006

This study is a program project grant to develop and apply novel techniques in the measurement of body fat distribution and regional body composition on interrelationships among body composition and metabolic alterations. Associations between race, fat distribution, and glucose metabolism will also be examined and utilized in developing future culture-specific body composition interventions.

n. Title: Effects of Diet & Exercise on Body Weight & Regional Fat Loss in Obese HIV-Infected Women

Source: NIDDK

PI: Heymsfield/Kotler

11/01/2000 - 10/31/2002

As part of a program project grant, the goal of this study was to examine the effects of a weight loss program on body composition, body fat distribution, in obese HIV-infected women with and without excessive abdominal fat occurring as a side effect of HIV-drug therapies.