

Intersection of IPV, HIV, and Affordable Housing in Durham, NC

PROJECT TOPIC	The Intersection of Intimate Partner Violence, HIV, and Affordable Housing Options in Durham, NC		
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I. BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

This research project is focused on the issues of intimate partner violence (IPV), prevalence of HIV, and lack of access to affordable housing options that affect women in Durham, North Carolina. The policy recommendations I will propose to alleviate the burden of the issues addressed are limited in this state due to Dillon's Rule, a North Carolina regulation that prohibits local governments from enacting legislative change without approval from the state legislature: this body has the authority to reject any policies implemented on a local level that are inconsistent, run counter to, or override state law.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

To conceptualize policy recommendations for this project, I performed a literature review of the three primary issues of focus – intimate partner violence, HIV, and affordable housing. My literature was composed of more general information, as well as information specific to Durham, NC. Additionally, I conducted nine in-depth interviews with high-level local government officials, as well as social workers, physicians, clinical research coordinators, and the Durham Mayor's Council for Women. My eventual policy recommendations were formulated based on the information gathered from the literature review and interviews.

III. FINDINGS

Intimate Partner Violence: IPV is any form of violence that is perpetrated by a current or former partner or spouse and may occur in heterosexual or same-sex relationships. The majority of individuals affected are women. Over 100,000 residents of North Carolina are affected by IPV each year and the state spends over \$300 million annually on costs associated with IPV. The Durham Crisis Response Center is the only organization in the Durham area with the primary goal of alleviating IPV.

HIV: HIV is closely associated with IPV as abusive partners are less likely to use condoms to prevent transmission and many women who are HIV positive fear dangerous retaliation if their status is disclosed to an abusive partner. Of North Carolina's 100 counties, Durham ranks 6th in newly diagnosed HIV rates. Despite medical advances and societal awareness, there remains a great deal of societal shame associated with an HIV-positive status.

Affordable Housing: There is a severe affordable housing crisis in Durham as a result of rapid economic growth and gentrification. Durham City Council and County Commissioners have made the issue a top priority and are currently collaborating with local groups, including the Durham Housing Authority, to advance current projects. Access to affordable housing is closely connected to IPV, as the primary reason that women remain in abusive relationships and environments is a lack of financial stability.

1. Grant survivors of IPV a "protected status" under state law.
2. Establish a partnership between Ryan White Grant Funding and Uber/Lyft to increase healthcare appointment attendance and accessibility.
3. Create an exception in state law to the requirement that fathers be informed of an infant's HIV-positive status.
4. Make information about programs and resources for HIV-positive women at the DCRC more widely-known and accessible, via their website and/or informational phone conversations.