**PLEASEPREPME.ORG** is an online hub for pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP and PEP) access. Three services work to improve visitors’ knowledge and empower them on their PrEP and PEP journeys.

**PLEASEPREPME DIRECTORY** of PrEP and PEP providers powered by CDC’s NPIN

**PLEASEPREPME RESOURCES** for various communities across all 50 states

**PLEASEPREPME CHAT** is confidential, online chat for all your PrEP and PEP questions

**CALIFORNIA** is where PleasePrEPMe began and where we continue to focus as we work to expand our collaborations to reach larger audiences in more states. This year, through a partnership with the **ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**, we brought our chat services to Arizonans, as well.

In 2019, we provided HIV-prevention information and resources through more than 1,000 chat interactions to almost 100,000 online visitors.

Excellent service: Thank you! Very helpful and encouraging.

Incredibly informative. I felt really reassured and very professional. Excellent

Extremely helpful - very polite and patient while answering all of my questions. Thank you to the entire Please PrEPme team for your kindness and willingness to assist. You rock!

Muy excelente información y la ves conformidad y esperanza de seguir adelante es un apoyo q Dios los puso en mi camino muchas gracias dios m los bendiga.

Antes de hablar con Charly me sentía yo muy mal pero ahora con las preguntas y las respuestas que él me dio ya me siento bien un poco mejor gracias Charly te lo agradezco mucho

Do YOU have a web-based resource for HIV-prevention information and access? Do you think we could be of service to your users, or would you like to learn more about our program? **Come chat with us!**

Or, email **CONTACT@PLEASEPREPME.ORG**. We look forward to partnering with you!
A Growing Web Presence

2019 Web Reach

PleasePrEPMe.org grew its total web visitors to **91,200** in 2019 from **77,500** in 2018. **60%** were Californians. **71%** of all users were on mobile.

Most visitors land on our homepage and ad landing pages, which include our paying for PrEP pages in **English** and **Spanish**.

Image: English and Spanish Paying for PrEP pages. Includes comprehensive information on national patient assistance programs.

The PleasePrEPMe directory was searched **21,000** times in 2019. The Spanish directory constituted **825** of these views.

Image: View of search results in the PrEP and PEP provider directory. Includes filters for providers who furnish PEP, have navigation services, have services in Spanish, and accept uninsured people. Includes links to a page on online providers and, if the visitor is in California, the California PrEP Assistance Program (CA PrEP-AP).

The most utilized pages are our resources on **U=U**, the **California PrEP Assistance Program (CA PrEP-AP)**, and our **PrEP Navigation Manual**. On average, visitors spend **5.3** minutes per session on each page.
Through online chat (9 a.m.–5 p.m. Pacific Time, Mon–Fri), text, telephone, and email, PleasePrEPMe’s online navigators had the pleasure of serving individuals through 1,015 interactions.

Of these:

- **74%** were PrEP/PEP users or potential users
- **24%** were non-clinical staff persons—navigators and other frontline workers
- **2%** were clinical staff persons

The majority of visitors were from 43 of the 58 California counties, reflecting our focus on the state.

**California: 73%**

Nearly half of all California visitors came from six counties:

- San Francisco County (19%)
- Alameda County (8%)
- San Diego County (7%)
- Sacramento Count (5%)
- Santa Clara County (5%)
- San Bernardino County (4.5%)

**Outside the US: 6%**

The majority of visitors’ first chat interaction is via our live, online chat. Visitors can also connect with us through email, messages left outside normal hours of operation, telephone, text, and social media.

**Image:** Percentage of chat visitors’ initial interactions with PleasePrEPMe by device
Expanding Access to PrEP through Chat Partnerships

In 2019, we were excited to create partnerships with Getting to Zero San Diego and San Francisco AIDS Foundation to bring our chat to users of their HIV-prevention pages, as well as the Arizona Department of Public Health, bringing chat to Arizonans.

Through these partnerships, we have been able to expand HIV-prevention awareness and education and provide warm handoffs to associated contacts where appropriate.

13% of chat visitors from these partnerships have been uninsured, with 67% needing assistance finding a provider. We have also been able to assist 40% with PEP needs and information.

In December 2019, Building Healthy Online Communities partnered with six California counties to launch two online HIV-prevention campaigns utilizing creative materials from the New York City Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

When visitors click on the BHOC online promotion, they land on an informational web page with PleasePrEPMe chat. Each page provides basic HIV-prevention information as well as payment assistance links, and gives visitors the option to search the PleasePrEPMe directory. Through the chat, PleasePrEPMe is able to assist visitors with PrEP, PEP, and other HIV-prevention navigation questions.
What are people chatting about?

Conversations with chat visitors are wide-ranging and often cover multiple topics as navigators utilize a sexual health coaching model to best meet visitors’ needs. Offering a sex-positive and non-judgmental space allows visitors to disclose information about their sexual encounters, as navigators share resources to help visitors explore HIV-prevention methods.

In 2019, conversations covered the following topics:

- PrEP and/or PEP education (61%)
- Navigating the health care system (37%)
- Identifying providers in the directory (36%)
- PrEP-AP (23%)

- Referral to non-PrEP or PEP-related resources (41%), including:
  - HIV testing/treatment/101 (11%)
  - U=U (6%)
  - Directory updates (5%)
  - Reproductive health (3%)
  - Other prevention (1%)
  - Other STIs (1%)

Image: 2019 providers (red) and chats (blue) by zipcode. While much of California is well covered, large gaps remain, particularly in the Central Valley region. We are working to improve chat coverage rates through targeted outreach. N.B.: We do not have zipcodes for all chat visitors so the chat map is not fully indicative of CA coverage.
Visitor needs: Paying for PrEP

Chat visitors report various challenges with accessing and maintaining PrEP.

- Spanish-speaking visitors are more likely to be referred to PrEP-AP (41% of all Spanish speakers vs. 27% of English speakers).
- Undocumented people worry about accessing government-funded programs.
- 27% of Spanish-speaking visitors are currently uninsured (compared with 10% of English speakers).
- Most Spanish-speaking visitors initially ask about HIV basics, and that conversation leads to discussing PrEP and how to pay for it.
- English-speaking visitors tend to ask about the best insurance plan to cover the cost of PrEP; most are insured but cannot afford to pay high deductibles or copays for medication.
- Sometimes visitors are reluctant to share their income. PleasePrEPMe provides eligibility criteria for various assistance programs, supporting visitors in finding a plan.

At the end of 2018, we began partnering with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to provide online chat that supports the awareness and use of the California PrEP Assistance Program (CA PrEP-AP), and other payment assistance programs. 23% of chats in 2019 involved a referral to PrEP-AP.

Our web page that hosts a downloadable infographic on CA PrEP-AP (PleasePrEPMe.org/CA-PrEP-AP) received 2,400 hits in 2019. With visitors spending an average of 4 minutes on the page, we believe they are finding the content relevant, useful, and digestible.
What are people saying about chat?

In 2019

Based on a 5-star post-chat rating system within the chat feature, in 2019, our navigators had an average score of 96%. In addition to the chat feature rating system, a satisfaction survey is sent by email when we have contact information for a visitor. Visitors can rate services on a scale of 1–5 (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree).

Of 301 surveys sent in 2019, 23 responses were recorded. On average, respondents scored PleasePrEPMe at 4.1 for whether we met their needs, helped them make decisions about HIV prevention, and whether they were likely to refer a friend/colleague to us.

Since inception

PleasePrEPMe also assessed visitor satisfaction and outcomes through an expanded user survey in English and Spanish. In January 2020, surveys were sent to 1,017 individuals who had used our online chat service and had shared email addresses from April 2017 to December 2019. Participants were entered into a gift card drawing, and a total of 63 people who had remembered contacting PleasePrEPMe (37 on their own behalf, 25 on others' behalf, 1 who did not recall) completed the surveys.

Of the 63 participants, 28 people were 18–34YO, 18 were 35–44YO, and 18 were older than 44YO. A total of 18 were Hispanic/Latino/Spanish-speaking, 16 African American/Black, 23 white, and 7 other ethnic backgrounds.

Of those chatting for themselves, 55% started PrEP and all were satisfied or very satisfied with their decision to start. Of those chatting for someone else, 65% reported that PleasePrEPMe was able to help with decision making. Those who did not start PrEP often reported that actual or perceived high costs of PrEP care and the need for support around cost assistance were barriers to starting.

Overall, the areas where PleasePrEPMe excelled included improving understanding of PrEP or PEP, finding a provider, finding information on payment options, finding other useful resources, and understanding how using CA PrEP-AP could benefit them.
Supporting Frontline Workers


With a quarter of our chat visitors being non-clinical staff members, we know frontline workers need support navigating the PrEP and PEP landscape, too.

**Helping People Access PrEP**, a PrEP navigation manual in English and Spanish, provides in-depth information to frontline staff on supporting people who seek PrEP to get and maintain their prescriptions and related care.

In 2019, **2,100** people accessed both versions of the manual, and **276** individuals requested update notifications.

As a living document, it is updated frequently to help keep navigators who [sign up for updates](#) informed about the changing landscape of PrEP care. At the end of 2019, we undertook a significant update. Notable new and/or revised parts include:

- Fully incorporated Descovy where appropriate throughout the manual.
- Added the new sections, Patient-Led PrEP Self-Care and Using Generic Drugs for PrEP.
- Completely revised the information on patient assistance programs.

User Feedback

In December 2019, PleasePrEPMe disseminated a survey to more than **200** frontline providers to assess the quality and use of the manual. More than **85%** believe the manual is “very” to “extremely” useful in their daily work and professional development. Most read or refer to the manual frequently—on a monthly, weekly, or as-updated basis.

Would **Helping People Access PrEP** be impactful to your work? [Sign up](#) for news and updates!
PrEP Navigation Training

Responding to demand, and with support from the National Library of Medicine, in fall 2019 we piloted a free, online PrEP navigation training, built upon the navigation manual.

“Helping People Access PrEP: A Frontline Provider Training on PrEP Research, Care, and Navigation” is a free, self-directed, online training designed to support navigators and other non-clinician staff in providing sex-positive, affirming PrEP services backed by current data and clinical best practices.

The course includes eight short modules. Narrated educational slides and videos feature PrEP consumers, navigators, and prescribers sharing insights and best practices. Each comes with a downloadable resource guide with additional info and tools.

Pilot Feedback

Since the training was released in September 2019, almost 200 participants have enrolled and over 75 have completed the full course. Evaluations have been overwhelmingly positive: 99% either agree or strongly agree that the course met their expectations. (The remaining 1% selected “neither agree nor disagree”.)

Participants appreciate that the course is comprehensive yet easy to follow and frames PrEP navigation skills within an affirming and inclusive sexual health coaching model.

- “Course was excellent and I would recommend that ALL PrEP Clinicians/Providers review the course as well as non-professional staff. Excellent information also in Module 8 [Self Care and Healthy Teams] which is rarely addressed by agencies.”
- “Thank you so much for including sex vs. gender and how pronouns are important in PrEP Navigation work. As a consumer of PrEP, a PrEP Navigator, and a trans non-binary person I have faced some serious roadblocks and triggers through my PrEP process. Thank you for asking PrEP Navigators and practitioners to step up.”
- “Love the guest speakers and variety of information in multiple forms (visual, auditory, etc).”
- “I thought it was great. It explained things much clearer and easier than previous trainings I've done.”

We have received a second round of funding from NLM to update the course with the most recent developments in PrEP care. Learn more at PleasePrEPMe.org/PrEPNavTraining or sign up for updates!
**Improve PrEP Awareness and Reach**

**Promotion + Outreach**

Paid promotion is a core component of PleasePrEPMe's outreach. 2019 outreach focused on supporting potential and current PrEP users based in California's Central Valley with information on how to pay for PrEP.

Through marketing training provided by ElementFive, we reduced the cost per user acquisition (measured by website hits) down from $0.90/user in 2018 to **$0.69/USER**.

The main promotion platforms were Facebook ads, Google Ads, and the hookup apps Grindr and Adam4Adam. **47%** of all traffic to PleasePrEPMe in 2019 came from paid outreach.

**Images**: Creative from paid Adam4Adam campaign

**What we learned this year**

Facebook proved more successful at attracting Spanish-speaking visitors based on number of clicks and cost per click, while Google Ads were more successful at attracting English-speaking visitors.

PleasePrEPMe is currently focusing one-third of resources for Google Ads on Spanish, two-thirds on English, and vice versa for Facebook.

Our Adam4Adam campaign proved more successful overall than Grindr outreach, with **4,800** website visitors vs. **3,000**, and **35** chats vs. **3**. We attribute this to the in-house creative services at Adam4Adam and overall lower barriers to entry for organizations with smaller budgets.
Website Accessibility Improvements

This year, we undertook website updates to improve accessibility and produce a friendlier website for information seekers using assistive technologies: dropdown menus, color contrast, alt text, and link text.

On our social media, we use Camel-Case for websites and hashtags, and image descriptions in the captions of our posts and videos where possible.

We have learned accessibility is a journey, not a destination. As such, we are always iterating to adapt to changes in how people use technology.

Website Content Update

We also completed a comprehensive review of the website and made updates to content, hosted links, and other resources.

Information on Descovy PrEP and 2-1-1 for anal sex were included throughout the site.

A commitment to being responsive to changes in the PrEP landscape in all aspects of our programming remains central to PleasePrEPMe’s values. So too does our overall use of language aim to be inclusive and people-first, respecting and honoring the bodies, experiences, and choices of all the people we serve.

Have suggestions or feedback for how PleasePrEPMe can improve our accessibility, content, or language? Please get in touch.
Flexing our Creative Muscles

PrEP Navigator Charlie Romero led content creation for PleasePrEPMe outreach and promotional efforts. The *Faces of PrEP* project and *Take Me I'm Yours* music video are incorporated throughout PleasePrEPMe social media, ads, other outreach materials, and website.

The goal of these projects is to showcase the diverse population we serve, featuring images that represent Latinx and Black communities that may benefit from our PrEP, PEP, and sexual health resources.

Images: Stills from *Take Me I’m Yours* music video. Image credit: @rubensamuelcortez

Images: Images from *Faces of PrEP* project. Image credit: @sculu0
PleasePrEPMe in the Wild

In 2019 you could also find PleasePrEPMe and our team.....

Presenting:

* The Family Planning Provider PrEP toolkit on the launch webinar for HHS Office of Population Affairs HIV webpage
* At Getting to Scale with PrEP Adoption for Key Populations with Ken Mayer (Fenway Health) and Dawn Smith (CDC)
* A poster on PleasePrEPMe chat at the 2019 National HIV Prevention Conference
* A poster on PleasePrEPMe chat at the 2019 UCSF Rodnick Colloquium
* To the National Crisis Text Line on PleasePrEPMe chat

Participating:

* In an amfAR brief: Expanding Access to Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for Adolescents and Young Adults
* On a PrEP Navigation 101 panel at the East Bay Update Navigation Bootcamp
* In the Central Valley Collaborative as founding members of the supporting team
* On the Los Angeles County PrEP/PEP Educators & Navigators event planning council
* In a think tank on the future of the non-clinical HIV workforce, hosted by the O'Neill Institute at Georgetown
* In creating the O'Neill Institute brief, HIV Prevention: Assessing Our Progress and Charting a Future Direction

Published:

* In the AAHIVM HIV Specialist June edition on stigma

Highlighted:

* Performing on Late Night in East Los Angeles
* Giving the keynote at Association of Nurses in AIDS Care Conference
* In TheBody.com: For PrEP 2-1-1 Dosing, the Information Is Often Bottom Up
* As a resource on the California Department of Public Health U=U fact sheets in English and Spanish
* As a resource to STD frontline workers at STD Engage
* As a guest speaker on the Hot Points podcast for the adult entertainment industry
* At many, many Getting to Zero and sexual health education and outreach events across California!
THANK YOU for coming on this journey with us.

Want to learn more about our work or how we can partner with you?

Come chat at PleasePrEPMe.org
or email Contact@PleasePrEPMe.org

Want to receive updates from us? Sign up for notifications!

With special thanks to the CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, STATE OFFICE OF AIDS, the NATIONAL COALITION OF STD DIRECTORS, the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE, and the ARIZONA DEPARTMENT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH for making our work possible.

Image: The PleasePrEPMe team. From left to right: Shannon Weber (Founder and Director), Charlie Romero (Online Navigator for PrEP and Sexual Health), Alan McCord (Director, Quality and Content), Laura Lazar (Program Manager), Reilly O’Neill (Editor and Special Projects).

Image credit: @shotinthecityphotography