

## Our Winter Newsletter

We at the national team publish this newsletter to keep our participants, referring providers, and the general public informed about the latest ANCHOR updates.

Our winter issue is devoted to a look back at the tumultuous year of 2020, and a preview of what we can expect in 2021.

**Jason Johnson Peretz**

National Recruitment and Retention Coordinator

## 2020 in Review

**In March, many locales faced lockdowns due to the pandemic.** In response, ANCHOR paused recruitment and established strict COVID protective measures for our staff and participants, following local health department guidelines.

**We also began to ask participants about their COVID history.** We saw relatively little COVID among our study population in 2020. Most of you have been strictly following social-distancing and mask-wearing guidelines, and that responsible behavior shows in our COVID data -- thank you!

**It is incredibly important** that everyone make every effort to attend the rest of your follow-up visits so that we can make the study data as robust as possible. While we were unable to see people in April during the initial lockdown, the cancelled visits during the pandemic did not invalidate the study. We can't continue to see just urgent cases, however.

*It is important that everyone who has enrolled in the study stay in touch with their sites, discuss with your local site staff what you can do to make your follow-up visits, and most essentially, show up for the appointment. Your local site staff will be happy to help.*



You can also sign up for appointment reminders or update your contact information on our website at <https://anchorstudy.org/participants/reminders>

**Recruitment goals:** The good news from 2020? We've passed the 80% mark for our total enrollment! Although we'd hoped to finish recruiting by the end of 2020, we have a chance of enrolling the final participant in early 2022.

## Plans for 2021

*J Johnson Peretz*

**We are still planning for the coming year,** but with so much moving online, we have begun to explore ways to use this newsletter to offer you a chance to hear more about the study and invite friends who are not part of the study.

**National webinar.** One suggestion we've heard is to host a national webinar where some of our clinicians and participants answer questions you have about high resolution anoscopies, HPV, and anal health in general.

**Film night.** Another idea we're exploring is to host a film night with small independent producers on topics of interest to our community: HIV and Ageing;

home movies from gay couples in the 1940s and 50s; and documentaries on issues of regional and global interest.

Please let your local CAB member know if you have more ideas to share with us!

## CAB News

*Michael Dorosh, CAB Chair*

What a year! The CAB made several significant changes during 2020. The most visible change is that we now only have one chair who serves for one year, rather than two co-chairs who transition every six months. We also made adjustments to our charter to bring our mission statement more into line with ongoing CAB and study needs.

Our future CAB meetings will alternate between educational presentations by guest speakers and reports on local site challenges and successes.

Most important, we've onboarded new CAB members at sites as diverse as Miami, Seattle, and San Francisco. In the coming year, we plan to add representatives from New Orleans, Wake Forest, and Newark. We are making special efforts to bring on more women and people of color.

We look forward to hearing from you, our fellow participants, in 2021!

**Learn more about the ANCHOR CAB at**  
<https://anchorstudy.org/cab/membership>



## ANCHOR in the News!

*Joel Bromwell*

ANCHOR was profiled in a recent article in Poz Magazine. The article talks about the increased risk of developing anal cancer if you are living with **HIV and have a history of anal warts**. The full article can be found here:

<https://www.poz.com/article/among-people-hiv-anal-warts-increase-likelihood-anal-cancer-13-times>

## Health Tips & Vaccine News

*Yves Gephardt, NYC-Cornell CAB member*

Kaiser has put out a useful video on how to **distinguish between COVID, cold, and flu** symptoms: “Because the symptoms of COVID-19, a seasonal cold, and the flu have a lot of similarities, mild cases of COVID-19 may go undetected. [Watch our video to learn more about the different symptoms for COVID-19, the flu, and a cold](#)” at <https://k-p.li/2Yhi2IT>

A recent New York Times article discusses the **relationship between HPV and oral cancer**. Researchers found that certain sexual practices at certain ages -- namely, cunnilingus among teenagers and young adults -- increases the risk of throat cancer later in life. “It’s not just sexual partners, but the timing, the kind of practice, the nature of the partners and other factors, plus aspects of our own immunological response that are all involved in this” according to the lead author of the study, Gypsyamber D’Souza, epidemiology professor at Johns Hopkins University. Read more here:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/12/well/live/sex-hpv-cancer.html>