

Tamar Braxton Talks About HIV

The singer spoke at a Black journalists conference.

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Singer and reality TV star Tamar Braxton has a gift for grabbing national headlines, often about her shenanigans and health issues. But in August, the “All the Way Home” singer used her voice and celebrity wattage to raise awareness in the African American community about the intersection of mental health, sexual wellness and HIV.

Braxton was on the keynote panel at the National Association for Black Journalists (NABJ) convention and career fair in Cleveland. Titled “Breaking the Silence: The Intersection of Mental Health, Sexual Wellness and HIV in the Black Community,” the panel was presented by the HIV pharmaceutical company ViiV Healthcare.

In addition to educating about the disproportionate impact of HIV in the Black community and the ability of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to prevent HIV, panelists stressed the impact of authentic storytelling—which can be amplified by journalists—and community-based initiatives.

“We often hear statistics about HIV in Black communities—but behind every number is a family, a story and a history often left untold,” said panelist Alftan Dyson, PharmD, of ViiV. “These are the lived realities that demand our attention and action—and journalists can play a lifesaving role by telling these stories.”

Indeed, both everyday people and headline-grabbing celebrities can raise awareness by sharing their stories. Earlier this year, Braxton drew national attention to PrEP when she posted a video on her social channels telling the world that, after a year of not dating, she is taking PrEP because “outside is crazy.” The Braxton Family Values star added: “I’d tell everyone to get on PrEP...prepare yourself.”

The video sparked a conversation online, with one fan writing: “You’re the first celebrity Black woman I’ve heard mention PrEP. I support you queen.”

