Bringing PrEP closer to home: Why diversifying service models matters

AVAC, PATH, International AIDS Society (IAS)
Taking PrEP online: Project PrEP in South Africa

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The goal of the project is to contribute to a decrease in the incidence of HIV among AGYW (age 15-24) in South Africa.

The aims of the project are to strengthen demand, uptake and retention for comprehensive prevention services including oral PrEP:

- Increase accessibility of PrEP for eligible AGYW population (15-24) in project implementation areas
  - Develop strategies to identify AGYW at highest risk
  - Test various demand creation strategies
  - Test different HIV screening/testing mechanisms

- Demonstrate effective delivery models and appropriate use of PrEP amongst adolescents
  - Reach over 600 000 AGYW and initiate 6640
  - Access AGYW through public facilities
  - Offer, initiate and retain AGYW on PrEP

- Generate and disseminate evidence on the use of PrEP in real life settings
  - Learn about how to deliver HIV prevention services, PrEP specifically, to AGYW
  - Gather evidence on cost-effective and successful service delivery mechanisms and interventions
  - Inform future scale up by NDoH of PrEP provision
## Building blocks of Project PrEP

### Pre COVID-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PrEP Screening, initiation and early follow-up (0-3 months)</th>
<th>PrEP continuation (+3 months)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community engagement and demand creation</td>
<td>Screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHEN Service frequency</td>
<td>Prior to project launch and ongoing throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHERE Service location</td>
<td>Project clusters with a focus on reaching communities where they are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO Service provider</td>
<td>Project staff with the support of CBOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOW Digital innovation</td>
<td>Social media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, websites, chat bot</td>
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NDoH guidance on PrEP provision during COVID-19

Providing prevention services for persons at increased risk for HIV infection (Highlights)

Managing New Clients
- Social mobilization activities curtailed but demand creation for PrEP continues
- New clients should not be denied these services.

Managing existing clients
- Provided with at least 2 month’s supply of pre-packed medication (if available stock permits).
- Collection can be arranged at alternative pick up points in the community, where possible
- Ongoing/routine support for continued use telephonically/WhatsApp/SMS.
- Appropriate COVID-19 infection control and prevention protocols observed at all times.

Continued support for capacitation of health facilities for implementation of PrEP
- Partners continue to support PrEP implementation and capacitation of facility staff through available online & offline tools

Monitoring and Reporting
- Partners continue to capture PrEP and related data and comply with reporting requirements during this period.
Adaptations made to Project PrEP in light of COVID-19
Online strategy: Intensified measures for reach and engagement

- Intensified engagement, information and monitoring of online platforms:
  - Social media budget doubled
  - MyPrEP chat bot, Sister Unathi, updated with COVID-19 information to support client Q&A both on Facebook and myprep.co.za.
- Demand Creation site staff trained and equipped to deal with outreach and service delivery
- Developed role specific job aids to assist integrated PrEP, ART and COVID-19 messaging and social mobilization
- All online communication geared towards driving clients to either Project PrEP-supported facilities or reaching out to ascertain a need for medication drop-off or collection
- Clients presenting at clinics or outreach spots, especially AGYW, are identified and moved to small group discussions and a focus on 1-to-1 interactions that lead to HIV testing, PrEP initiations and SRH needs.
Online reach and engagement trends during lockdown

MyPrEP Social media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

Facebook Messenger (real-person response) receives on average 30-60 conversations per day.

Currently, the chat bot living on MyPrEP Facebook page and website has approx. 5 000 conversations per month with a 85% positive feedback rate – dependent on boosting budget!

Engagement is primarily driven by users reaching out to the project which demonstrates online interest.
# Building blocks of Project PrEP

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<td>Community engagement and demand creation</td>
<td>PrEP refill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Screening</td>
<td>Routine clinical follow-up</td>
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<td>PrEP initiation visit</td>
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<td>Initial follow-up</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st visit</td>
<td>Every 2 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st visit</td>
<td>Month 4 &amp; 7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### WHEN
- **Service frequency**
  - Prior to project launch and ongoing throughout
  - Month 1
  - Every 2 months
  - Month 4 & 7

### WHERE
- **Service location**
  - Mobile clinic near clinic / Mobile outreach
  - Min in-clinic
  - Mobile clinic near clinic / Mobile outreach
  - Mobile clinic near clinic / Mobile outreach
  - Home deliveries
  - Remote location set up for pickup and drop off
  - Community spots convenient to AGYW
  - Mobile clinic
  - Remote location set up for pickup and drop off
  - Community spots convenient to AGYW
  - Mobile clinic near clinic / Mobile outreach
  - Min in-clinic

### WHO
- **Service provider**
  - Mostly mobile team
  - Some clinic (DoH)
  - Mobile clinic near clinic / Mobile outreach
  - Some clinic (DoH)
  - Mobile clinic near clinic / Mobile outreach
  - Some clinic (DoH)
  - Mobile clinic near clinic / Mobile outreach
  - Some clinic (DoH)
  - Mobile team
  - Some clinic (DoH)

### WHAT
- **Service package**
  - Stakeholder engagements, community radio, outreach, PrEP, HIV prevention – integrated SRH
  - PrEP, HIV prevention – integrated SRH
  - PrEP, HIV prevention – integrated SRH
  - Medication pick-up
  - PrEP, HIV prevention – integrated SRH

### HOW
- **Digital innovation efforts, chat bot updated**
  - Mobile clinic schedule boosted on social media
  - Intensified WhatsApp, telephone
  - Intensified WhatsApp, telephone
  - Intensified WhatsApp, telephone
Programmatic data

Project PrEP
AGYW tested and initiated on PrEP

March-May 2020, including during COVID-19 lockdown

Advised clients to pick-up meds prior to hard lockdown

Pre Lockdown

Lockdown level 5

Lockdown level 4

HIV testing
PrEP initiation
PrEP Initiations: All vs AGYW before and during national lock down

Data representation:
- Pre Lockdown
- Lockdown level 5
- Lockdown level 4

Graph shows the number of clients initiated per period from 1-5 Mar to 22-28 May.

Key:
- Periods:
  - 1-5 Mar
  - 6-12 Mar
  - 13-19 Mar
  - 20-26 Mar
  - 27 Mar-2 Apr
  - 3-9 Apr
  - 10-16 Apr
  - 17-23 Apr
  - 24-30 Apr
  - 1-7 May
  - 8-14 May
  - 15-21 May
  - 22-28 May

- Graph lines:
  - ALL
  - AGYW

Legend:
- ALL
- AGYW
PrEP follow up visits: Mar-May 2020

### AGYW

- **AGYW follow up visits**
  - Pre Lockdown: 252
  - Lockdown level 5: 184 (-27%)
  - Lockdown level 4: 174 (-5%)

### ALL

- **Follow up visits per cluster_ ALL**
  - Pre Lockdown
  - Lockdown level 5
  - Lockdown level 4

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<th>Tshwane</th>
<th>KZN</th>
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<td>Mar 13-19</td>
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<td>Mar 20-26</td>
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<td>Apr 1-9</td>
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<td>May 1-7</td>
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<td>May 8-14</td>
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<td>May 15-21</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 22-28</td>
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**COVID 19 Phases**

- **Pre Lockdown**
- **Lockdown level 5**
- **Lockdown level 4**
PrEP continuation, by site

Intensified telephonic follow up helped to assist with continuation
Key learnings and challenges over lockdown

- Online platforms needed to be leveraged
- Initiation and continuation were seriously affected by initial lockdown phase 5 (hard lockdown)
- Projects need to pivot rapidly respond to changing situations
- Communication is key when pivoting
- Intensified telephone follow-ups and decentralized approaches proved successful in bringing clients into services and keeping them coming back
- Integrated service delivery can continue and there is a demand for services
AIDS 2020

Thank You