AIDS 2020
EXHIBITION

Towards Sustainability and Scalability of HIV Self-Testing
COVID-19 and HIV: Zoom into HIVST pharmacy distribution models, experiences from South Africa and Eswatini

Moderator   Anna Hellstrom, Unitaid
Presenters   Mohammed Majam, Ezintsha, Ralitza Dekova, PSI Eswatini & Celeste Madondo, SFH South Africa
HIV SELF-TESTING AFRICA

Integrating HIVST distribution with COVID-19 response, opportunities at community level

Considerations for HIVST in the context of COVID-19

Mohammed Majam, Head: Medical Technologies
Ezintsha, Wits RHI South Africa
COVID-19: Impact on Health Services
Impact to services...

- Clinics across the country were reporting a dramatic decrease in patients collecting their medication.
- Diversion of staff from HIV outreach programmes to Covid-19 screening could further slow down HIV-testing and treatment initiation.
- In one province, the DOH is trying to trace about 12,000 TB and HIV patients who had not collected their medication since the start of lockdown.
- The average percentage reduction in medicine collections for TB is 1.4% and 19.6% for HIV (GDOH, Times Live 26 May 2020)
The role of HIVST during COVID-19...

- The COVID-19 pandemic is an unanticipated and unprecedented shock to South Africa’s HIV prevention and treatment efforts, creating a “new normal” globally that will require significant adjustment.

- Our project’s approach to “reach people where they are”:
  - through greater use of self-testing technologies,
  - mobile phone solutions,
  - decentralized service delivery, and
  - behaviorally-informed communications

- Well-suited to an environment in which social distancing is necessary, individuals face added burdens that impede HIV prevention behaviors, and health systems are severely strained.

- HIV Self-Testing by definition is well suited for the HTS Response during the era of COVID-19 – User lead, decentralised, quick, removes HCW burden
Provision of HIVST through Community Based Pharmacies

- Expand distribution of HIVST at pharmacies and retailers, using tools already developed on STAR.
- Pharmacies and retailers have excellent market penetration, proximity to clients, and good operational controls.
- During government-mandated lockdowns, their designation as essential services providers means that they remain almost universally accessible.
- They are therefore ideal sites to provide HIV testing, without requiring health workers or community outreach, via provision of self-testing kits.
>1100 Independent Community Pharmacy Members Across South Africa
Rapid scale-up of Pharmacy Model

- Initiated during Level 5 ("Hard lockdown") – i.e. no travel, limited logistics
- Addition of 27 new pharmacies across multiple provinces to ensure continuity of HIVST provision and services
- Utilization of national ICPA distribution infrastructure to get tests to pharmacists
- Provision of tests, job aids, IEC materials, demand creation tools
- Advertising on social media, community radio, and in-store
- Online training and pharmacy initiation
- Remote support and troubleshooting for pharmacists
Demand Creation

Free HIV Self-Screening kits available here.
Test yourself for HIV today and know your status!

Have you tested recently?
Test regularly, Test anywhere

OraQuick® HIV SELF-TEST

At home
Confidential, can be done anywhere
Easy
Oral swab test, no blood, results in 20 minutes
Accurate
Same test used by healthcare professionals

Available here!

OraSure Technologies
Mobile support tools

• Several digital platforms have been developed on the STAR program to assist the end-user and to facilitate linkage into care.

• Data free Web App that allows a patient to go through the full journey from receipt of kit, through to the process, interpretation of results and reporting.

• A WhatsApp chat bot that allows for result reporting, testing support and troubleshooting.

• A toll free call in number to report results and seek additional assistance.
Simplified M/E

- Simplified paper-based data collection forms to minimize patient interaction time, and speed up the process

- Online capturing platform provided to pharmacists with capacity
Private Sector Pharmacy distribution during COVID-19 disaggregated by age, gender and first-time testers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Percent First time testers (Male)</th>
<th>Percent First time testers (Female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Timeframe: 15 April 2020 – 15 June 2020
Linkage and follow up

• Follow up is voluntary and only consenting participants can be followed
• Positive reported cases through the mHealth channels are followed up by telephonic follow up by linkage officers.
• Confirmatory testing is recommended at the pharmacy at which the HIV Self-Test was received.
• Linkage officers provide clients with information regarding HTS services available in the area in which they live
Conclusion

• The role of HIVST during COVID-19 is critical
• Ensuring access through decentralized models such as pharmacies, workplaces, and online will be critical to ensure continuity of the HTS program and access.
• Digital tools will play a greater role to ensure minimal contact with surfaces and with individuals incl HCW’s
Acknowledgements

• UNITAID
• National Department of Health
• STAR Partners: PSI, SFH, CHAI, LSHTM
• Wits RHI Ezintsha STAR team
• WHO
• ICPA

CONTACT: MOHAMMED MAJAM, +27 82 826 0180, mmajam@wrhi.ac.za
COVID-19 and HIV: Zoom into HIVST pharmacy distribution models, experiences from South Africa and Eswatini
AIDS 2020
THE NEXT FUTURE: POWER IN MY HANDS
COVID-19 and HIV: Zoom into HIVST pharmacy distribution models, experiences from South Africa and Eswatini

Ralitza Dekova
HIV Self-Testing Program Manager
PSI Eswatini
Eswatini

Population: 1,140,000
Rural population: 76%
Median age: 21.7 years

HIV prevalence, age 15+ (2016)

Proportion of sub-populations unaware of HIV-positive status (2016-7)

- 15 - 24 y.o.: 34%
- Male: 23%
- Urban: 20%
- Female: 11%
- Total: 15%
HIVST in Eswatini

- Oral HIV self-tests **piloted** in 2017
- **STAR** project began in 2017 in Eswatini, largest evaluation of HIV self-testing worldwide

National AIDS Program guidance on HIVST:

1. Focus on **young women**; **men** of all ages and **key populations**
2. Distribution of HIVST at **workplaces** (factories; manufacturing plants; logistics companies); community **hotspots/events**; **index contact tracing**; at high-volume healthcare **facilities**; secondary distribution to **pregnant women**, clients with **STIs**

**HIV SELF TESTING** Do it yourself!

**PSI Eswatini supports MOH** in

- community HIV testing,
- community ART initiation and
- HIV prevention interventions

in all four regions of the country.
COVID-19 in Eswatini

As of June 24:

Total population of Eswatini: 1,140,000
Total number of confirmed cases: 690 (6 per 10,000 people)
Total recoveries: 331 (48%)
Total deaths: 7 (0.01% mortality rate)

28 March 2020: National lockdown announced
- Non-essential businesses closed
- Pharmacies, healthcare facilities, food stores open
- Work from home order in place
Recommendation for HIV testing services from Ministry of Health

In order to ensure continuity of HIV testing services with less risk for health care workforce and the community MOH is recommending:

1. That community HTS counselors may be used in facilities to provide HTS eligibility screening and risk assessment, contact elicitation and contact follow up through phone calls.

2. The use of HIV self-testing distribution to reach contacts of positive patients identified in the facility. Only contacts screening positive with the self-test kit should attend the facility for the purpose of confirmation.

3. Community distribution of HIV self-test kits in the community by HTS counsellors using only pharmacies and shops as channels for distribution.

Your continued support and cooperation is always appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Dr VUSI MAGAGULA
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES MINISTRY OF HEALTH
HIV self-testing: before and after lockdown

**Total number of HIVST kits distributed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Kits Distributed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>1220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>14104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>9019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMMUNITY HIVST DISTRIBUTION THROUGH:**

- Index contact tracing in the community
- Workplace distribution
  - HCW elicits contacts from newly diagnosed PLHIV
  - Offer HIVST to associates of PLHIV
  - Reactive HIVST can be confirmed immediately
  - Distribution at workplaces

**COMMUNITY HIVST DISTRIBUTION THROUGH (Lockdown):**

- Pharmacies
- Food stores
  - Eligibility screening and risk assessment conducted
  - Consent for follow up
  - Phone call for follow up support, including linkage to HIV prevention and HIV treatment
New modality of distribution: partnering with pharmacies

- Pharmacies willing to partner as a public service
- No private sales of HIVST yet
- Creating demand, increasing awareness for the public
- Introducing the pharmacies to the concept
- Accessing an HIV self-test in public: normalizing the behaviour; stigma-reduction effects
Promoting HIV self-testing: in the national newspaper and radio stations

Call the toll free line to find out where you can get an HIV self-test
Distribution of oral HIVST kits during lockdown, April & May 2020

HIVST distribution by type (n=23,123)

- Primary distribution: 81%
- Secondary distribution: 19%

Primary HIVST distribution by sex (n=18,564)

- Male: 51%
- Female: 49%

HIVST distribution by age, sex and testing frequency (N=18,564)

- Male
  - % never tested: 49%

- Female
  - % never tested: 51%
Follow-up calls during lockdown

HIVST follow-up cascade, April & May 2020

- Client follow-ups are still ongoing
- New strategy to strengthen linkage to care (onsite confirmation)
Conclusion

- Community HTS is a major component of HTS in general in Eswatini, so we were required to act quickly to continue providing this important service.
- Rapid adaptation of HTS: both by MoH & HTS partners.
- Pharmacy is an appropriate and acceptable place to do this activity – especially in early stages of introducing & adapting HIVST.
- HIVST is ideal for physical distancing and screening for HIV.
- Follow up done by phone call & visit is possible where needed.
- Reached clients we normally wouldn’t through our standard targeted means (e.g. clients who may not go to sports events; cultural events; at the typical workplaces that we service).
Acknowledgements

Contact

Ralitza Dekova
HIV Self-Testing Program Manager
PSI Eswatini
ralitzad@psi.sz

Dr. Karin Hatzold
Director, Unitaid STAR Project
khatzold@psi.org
STAR EXHIBITION BOOTH

THURSDAY, JULY 9

COVID-19 AND HIVST: ZOOM INTO HIVST ONLINE DISTRIBUTION MODELS, EXPERIENCES FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND VIETNAM

TIME: 4-5AM EDT | 10-11AM UTC+2

HIV SELF-TESTING: WHERE ARE WE WITH POLICY, HIV SELF-TEST KIT REGULATION AND SAFETY MONITORING WEBINAR

TIME: 11-12PM EDT | 5-6PM UTC+2

Join here!
Towards Sustainability and Scalability of HIV Self-Testing

COVID-19 and HIVST: Zoom into HIVST online distribution models, experiences from Vietnam & South Africa

Moderator  Heather Ingold, Unitaid

Presenters  Celeste Madondo, SFH South Africa,
            Hong Anh Doan, USAID/PATH & Tham Tran, USAID/PATH
WEBINAR

HIV Self-Testing: Where Are We with Policy, HIV Self-Test Kit Regulation and Registration and Safety Monitoring

Thursday 09 July 2020
11am EST/ 5pm UTC