Background

On 1 June 2016, the National Department of Health (NDoH) introduced oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and immediate test and treat at selected sex worker project sites. The purpose of this poster is to document the process followed by Wits Reproductive Health & HIV Institute (WitsRHI) and McCann Global Health, under the USAID-funded OPTIONS project, in supporting the NDoH with the development and production of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials focusing on oral PrEP and supporting the rollout for sex workers (SWs) in South Africa.

Preparing the market with IEC materials

Multiple partners involved in sex worker programmes provided insights and feedback to inform the launch of oral PrEP in South Africa.

The target audiences for these materials included:
- Oral prep users, specifically sex workers at high risk of HIV infection
- Health care workers (HCWs)
- Peer educators and counsellors (sex workers are often trained to perform these roles)

Methods

In partnership with the OPTIONS consortium, McCann Global Health rapidly developed draft concepts through a creative workshop with a cross-functional team, including input from consumer and health advertising personnel (strategist, copy, art, and creative directors). Building on a South Africa/PrEP communications landscape analysis conducted by McCann earlier in the year, which looked at the acceptance of oral PrEP among young women, female sex workers, and health workers, three creative concepts for the target audiences were developed and presented to NDoH.

The concept ‘We are the generation that will end HIV’ was preferred. End-users and stakeholders specifically liked:

- “If this generation gets it right, we will end HIV”
- “It allows service users to take control of their own health”
- “The word right makes it empowering”

Based on stakeholder feedback, Wits RHI adapted and expanded the selected concept into a poster set, fact sheet, frequently asked questions brochure, and PrEP pocket book for SWs initiating on oral PrEP. Even though these materials were used for the initial SW oral PrEP launch, it was developed with a broader audience (not SW-specific audience) in mind, to allow for broader use and the minimization of stigma.

The oral PrEP IEC materials have been adopted across the sex worker sites, and have been adapted for use in Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) PrEP demonstration projects and the MSM rollout. The design concept and graphics are described as empowering and positive.

THE START OF A MOVEMENT? We are the generation has become a popular graphic and statement adapted by local and international audiences and a source of pride for end-users.

Results

Feedback from sites has been encouraged and applied in an effort to ensure the materials are adapted in accordance with end-user needs. Associated job aids and supervison tools have been developed based on the initial concept. A formal evaluation of the materials is planned for 2017 to determine how the materials influenced knowledge and the intent for behaviour-change among end-users.

Conclusion

The OPTIONS Consortium is made possible by the generous assistance from the American people through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with PEPFAR. Financial assistance was provided by USAID to FH 960, Wits RHI, and AVAC under the terms of Cooperative Agreement No. AID-OAA-A-15-00035. The contents do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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