FACTORS INFLUENCING INITIATION, CONTINUATION & DISCONTINUATION OF ORAL PREP AT SELECTED FACILITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA: Findings from the ACCESS Study

IAS Conference 2018: 25 July 2018
Session: PrEP Work in Progress

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author and co-authors of this presentation declare that no conflict of interest exists with regards to the development, conduct or analysis of this research.
ACCESS:

Advancing PrEP: Comprehensive and Combined Operations Research of Services for Sex workers and men who have sex with men

Collaborative effort between OPTIONS (Wits RHI) and Prevention Market Manager in support of NDoH PrEP roll-out
Study background and site selection

South Africa: June 2016 PrEP Launch for SW and April 2017 for MSM

June 2017 – PrEP available at 16 facilities in 6 Provinces

9 facilities selected for operations research

Operations research is needed to learn from national PrEP rollout and improve program implementation

ACCESS was conducted at 9 sites across 4 provinces:

- NSA Hoedspruit (Rural)
- NSA Musina (Rural)
- PHRU Soweto (Peri-urban)
- WRHI Tshwane (Urban)
- ANOVA Health4Men Yeoville (Urban)
- OUT Ten81 Pretoria (Urban)
- THCA eThekwini (Urban)
- THCA uMkhanyakude (Urban)
- ANOVA Health4Men Woodstock (Urban)
Study Objectives & Methodology

**Clients**
Examine factors affecting clients’ decision to initiate, continue, and/or stop PrEP use

**Providers & Systems**
Assess service provider knowledge, attitudes, and practiced behaviours around oral PrEP delivery

**Knowledge Sources**
Examine the effectiveness of oral PrEP marketing and communication mechanisms

Cross-sectional descriptive study
HIV negative individuals accessing services (18 years and above) at fixed or mobile sites

- **Survey**
  - 317 Clients Enrolled
  - After data cleaning
  - 299 Effective Sample

- **9 SITES**

- **317 Clients Enrolled**
  - 156 Female Sex Workers
    - Heard of PrEP
  - 80 MSM
    - Heard of PrEP
  - 63 Other
    - Heard of PrEP

- **149 Heard of PrEP**
  - 57 Current Users
    - 43 Past Users
    - 49 Never Users
  - 22 Current Users
    - 31 Past Users
    - 24 Never Users
  - 15 Current Users
    - 6 Past Users
    - 13 Never Users

- **In-depth Interview**
  - 29 Clients Enrolled
    - 94 Current Users
    - 80 Past Users
    - 86 Never Users

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- **In-depth Interview**
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Participant demographics

156 FSW

71% South African
48% Zulu speaking
65% Single/never married

29.9 years [mean age]

80 MSM

98% South African
61% English/Afrikaans speaking
69% Single/never married

33.9 years [mean age]

63 Other

98% South African
44% Zulu speaking
54% Single/never married

31.5 years [mean age]
Missed opportunities to provide PrEP

Clients who have never used PrEP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FSW (n=44)</th>
<th>MSM (n=24)</th>
<th>Other (n=11)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45% Declined</td>
<td>4% Reason for decline (n=24):</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55% Never Been Offered</td>
<td>67% Reason for decline (n=7):</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67% Starting Today</td>
<td>29% Reason for decline (n=7):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reason for decline (n=24):
- 12 side effects
- 3 Stigma
- 2 Clinic too far
- 1 Family Disapproved
- 1 Monogamous
- 5 Other

Reason for decline (n=7):
- 2 Side Effects
- 1 Clinic too far,
- 1 Monogamous
- 3 Other

Reason for decline (n=3):
- 1 I don’t like pills
- 1 I am undecided
- 1 Has one faithful sexual partner

Missed Opportunity: Out of 78 clients, 44 (56%) had never been offered PrEP of which 23 (52%) perceived themselves at risk of HIV; 91% (n=21) had tested for HIV
Sex and Risk: A driver for PrEP uptake

Reasons for Initiation amongst Current and Past Users of PrEP

Out of the 53 MSM current and past users, 35 did not understand this question and responses were invalid and excluded from the analysis of this question.

Sex and Risk: Irrespective of key population type the primary reason for initiating PrEP was being sexually active.
Sex and Risk: A driver to continue on PrEP

Reasons for Continuation amongst Current Users of PrEP

Sex and Risk: Risk perceived from sexual activity remains as a prominent reason to continue on PrEP, irrespective of key population

* Multiple responses allowed
**Side Effects: A major reason for stopping PrEP**

**Reasons for Discontinuation of PrEP among Past Users of PrEP**

- **Side effects were too much**: 87% (FSW), 72% (MSM), 17% (Other)
- **Clinic is too far**: 17% (FSW), 6% (MSM), 6% (Other)
- **Clinic did not offer PrEP anymore**: 6% (FSW), 6% (MSM), 6% (Other)
- **My partner told me to stop using PrEP**: 26% (FSW), 33% (MSM), 6% (Other)
- **I felt stigmatized**: 20% (FSW), 6% (MSM), 14% (Other)
- **Other reason**: 10% (FSW), 17% (MSM), 10% (Other)

* Multiple responses allowed

Side effects were primarily identified as **gastro-intestinal upsets**, such as nausea and vomiting in FSW, and dizziness, nausea, and headaches in MSM.
Side effects affects daily life of past users

**Tolerating Side Effects:** There could be distinct differences between current and past users in the way in which they tolerate side effects.
Management of side effects not well covered in counselling sessions

Client recall of topics covered in counselling with provider

Topics Covered During PrEP Counselling Sessions (Multiple Responses Allowed)

- How to use oral PrEP
- When to use oral PrEP
- Safety
- Side Effects
- Managing Side Effects
- Other Topic

Percentage (%)

- FSW (n=125)
  - How to use oral PrEP: 92%
  - When to use oral PrEP: 81%, 75%
  - Safety: 79%
  - Side Effects: 81%
  - Managing Side Effects: 49%
  - Other Topic: 14%

- MSM (n=59)
  - How to use oral PrEP: 66%, 68%
  - When to use oral PrEP: 75%, 68%
  - Safety: 59%, 55%
  - Side Effects: 50%
  - Managing Side Effects: 23%
  - Other Topic: 8%

- Other (n=22)
  - How to use oral PrEP: 68%
  - When to use oral PrEP: 68%
  - Safety: 55%
  - Side Effects: 50%
  - Managing Side Effects: 23%
  - Other Topic: 14%
Summing it all up...

Missed Opportunities to offer PrEP

- **Lack of uptake** of PrEP in this sample can be attributed to clients not being offered PrEP along with concerns over side effects
- This highlights missed opportunities to offer PrEP to clients who perceive HIV risk

Knowing your risk drives PrEP initiation & Continuation

- **Initiation** is largely driven by perceiving risk associated with sexual activity

Side effects influence discontinuation

- Clients who continue on PrEP appear to tolerate side effects differently from those that discontinue
- Counselling appears to cover the possibility of side effects but to a lesser degree the management of side effects
Where to from here...

Offering PrEP to those at risk
- Enable providers to identify clients at risk of HIV through client-centred counselling
- In South Africa, revision of clinical and counselling training underway

Counselling on managing side effects
- Provide more focused counselling to set expectations for side effects and equip users with methods to manage them.
- Clinical and counselling training revision will stress importance of counselling on both side effects as well as side effect management

Understanding provider perceptions
- Analyse provider in-depth interview
- Convene workshop with providers
Acknowledgments

This program is made possible by the generous assistance from the American people through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with PEPFAR 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.

We would like to acknowledge the South African National Department of Health for their support throughout conducting this study.

We would like to acknowledge Wits RHI, ANOVA Health for Men, North Star Alliance, TB HIV Care, PHRU, Out Ten 81 for allowing access to the sites and to the providers and clients who participated in the study.

We would like to acknowledge the data collectors who were contracted from Freshly Ground Insights (FGI), as well as FGI leadership.

We would like to acknowledge the ACCESS study team from Wits RHI, Prevention Market Manager (AVAC-CHAI) and FHI 360.
Thank you for your attention

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