

Strategic Resource Allocation Improves HIV Self-Testing Among Young Persons in Southern Nigeria

Authors

E. Nwanji¹, O. Onwah¹, O. Toyo¹, U. Akpan¹, M. Unimuke¹, A. James², C. Okolo³, C. Nwageneh³, B. Oyawola⁴, O. Igboelina⁴, D. Ogundehin⁴, E. James⁵, C. Obiora-Okafo⁶, A. Idemudia⁶, C. Nwadike⁶, K. Kakanfo⁶, B. Pius⁶, B. Onimode⁶, A. Raji⁶, B. Oyawola⁶, B. Kagniniwai⁶, O. Asaolu⁷, A. Bashorun⁷, A. Gambo⁷, D. Onime⁷, J. Piust⁷, O. Oyelaran⁷, R. Goldstein⁷, O. Onyedinachi¹, A. Adegboye¹, A. Eyo¹

Affiliations

- ¹Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), Uyo, Nigeria
- ²Achieving Health Nigeria Initiative
- ³FHI360, Abuja, Nigeria
- ⁴Office of HIV/AIDS and TB, United States Agency for International Development, Abuja, Nigeria
- ⁵Office of HIV/AIDS, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington DC, USA
- ⁶National AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Infections Control and Hepatitis Programme (NASCP), Federal Ministry of Health, Abuja, Nigeria
- ⁷National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA), Abuja, Nigeria

Background

Adolescents and young persons (AYP) face several barriers to accessing HIV testing services (HTS). In September 2022, the PEPFAR/USAID-funded ECEWS ACE-5 project allocated 60% of its HIV Self-Testing (HIVST) kits to AYP, which were then distributed by peer AYPs. This study assessed the effect of this strategy on the uptake of HIVST among AYPs in Southern Nigeria

Method

This was a retrospective cross-sectional study using HIVST distribution data from the District Health Information System of 155 health facilities in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States. HIVST kits were distributed through various facility/community-based channels. During the intervention, the HIVST allocated to AYPs was separated from those for other sub-populations at these channels and peer AYPs were primarily responsible for the distribution. The age and sex of recipients, and the number of kits distributed were extracted. Proportions of all HIVST kits distributed to AYP (10-24 years) were compared 15 months before (P1: July 2021-September 2022) and 15 months after commencing the intervention (P2: October 2022-December 2023) using Mann-Whitney U-test.

Resource allocation when combined with peer-led service delivery improves service uptake among young person

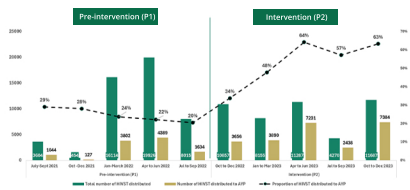
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Results

Of the 94,369 HIVST kits distributed over the 30-month period, 52.1% (49,166) were distributed to males and 37.7% (n=35,595) to AYP. Of those distributed to AYP, 36% (12,803) were distributed to those aged 15-19 years and 55.8% (19,865) to those aged 20-24years. The proportion of HIVST distributed to AYP increased from 22.9% (10,996/48113) in P1 to 53.2% (24,599/46,256) in P2 (p=0.034) (Figure 1). This increase occurred across all age bands (10-14 years: 1.7% [803/48,113] vs 4.6% [2,124/46,256] p=0.034; 15-19 years: 5.7% [2,733/48,113] vs 21.8% [10,070/46,256] p<0.001; 20-24 years 15.5% [7,460/48,113] vs 26.8% [12,405/46,246] [p=0.002]).

HIV self-testing kits distribution trends among Adolescents and Young Persons (AYP) in Southern Nigeria



Conclusions

Strategic resource allocation improved HIVST distribution among AYP in this setting. Programs looking to expand the use of HIVST among AYP could consider this approach.

References

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