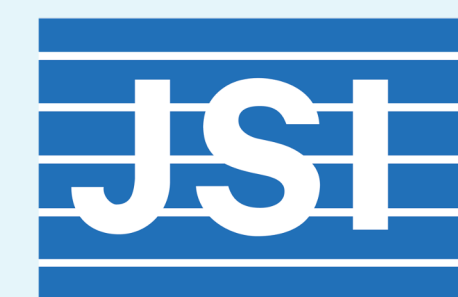


Increasing Uptake of Prep Through Community Distribution: The Case of a CSO in Western Region Of Ghana



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Background

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a very efficacious medicine for HIV prevention, but initial policy in Ghana required PrEP to be provided in health facilities, which led to low uptake. As a pioneering civil society organization in HIV service provision for key populations in Ghana, Maritime Life Precious Foundation (MLPF), a sub-grantee of the JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc., (JSI)-managed USAID Strengthening the Care Continuum project, piloted a community-based service delivery model to increase PrEP uptake.

Response

Between April and June 2021, MLPF began offering PrEP services through its outreach activities to key populations at two MLPF-supported sites in the Western Region by adding a team of PrEP-trained nurses to the existing HIV testing services outreach team. Key populations who tested positive were placed on antiretroviral therapy and those who were negative were referred to the PrEP team for immediate initiation at the same venue.

Results

Between October 2020 and March 2021, prior to the introduction of community distribution, only 179 clients were initiated on PrEP at health facilities in the Western Region. Within three months of introduction (April–June 2021), 330 clients had been initiated on PrEP. MLPF’s achievement of 184% of the PrEP initiation target within a shorter period showed that community distribution gained acceptance among the target population.

Conclusion

Community-based PrEP distribution is effective and should complement facility-based initiatives. Results of this case study have intrinsic benefits for the review of national PrEP policy.



Health care worker providing HIV counseling. Photo: JSI.

PrEP Initiation Across Two Periods

