

POPULATION COUNCIL CONGRATULATES ASPIRE AND IPM-027 DAPIVIRINE RING STUDY RESEARCHERS AND PARTICIPANTS

NEW YORK (22 February 2016) – The results of ASPIRE and the interim results from IPM-027 represent encouraging steps forward in HIV prevention for women. The dapivirine ring cut HIV infection risk by more than one third in women older than 21. For women 21 and younger, there was no significant reduction in HIV risk.

As with other studies before them, these trials offer clear evidence of the potential for ARV-based approaches to reduce HIV infection risk, but also show that creating products that women use consistently are as important as delivering a potent anti-HIV drug.

Worldwide, women and girls are among those at highest risk for HIV infection. The extremely high HIV incidence rates in these study cohorts remind us of the extraordinary need for new HIV protection methods for women of all ages – and for greater understanding of factors that may put younger women at greater risk for infection.

The Population Council supports open-label extension (OLE) studies to further explore effectiveness of the dapivirine ring among women who know it works and who choose to use it. In OLE studies of oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), adherence rates increased notably once participants knew they were receiving an active drug, which provided further evidence of public health benefit. Through OLE studies we can continue to explore issues related to acceptability and adherence and to build the outreach, education and support systems to foster use of the dapivirine ring and other ARV-based prevention products.

The Population Council is committed to working with our partners to understand the results of the ring studies, supporting women of all ages to protect their health, and developing the next generation of tools and strategies to protect the sexual and reproductive health of women worldwide. Among these are a new generation of [multipurpose prevention technologies \(MPTs\)](#) being developed by the Council and our partners, which are designed to prevent HIV, other sexually transmitted infections and, if desired, unintended pregnancy, simultaneously. The Council also continues to investigate new ways to measure adherence and improve trial design for a range of HIV prevention approaches, and the best ways to make the products we have available to women at risk.

As we review and analyze today's results, we thank the more than 4,500 women who participated in the dapivirine ring studies, and the tens of thousands of others who have and who continue to participate in research to find safe, effective, long-acting and on-demand HIV prevention interventions for women.

About the Population Council

The Population Council confronts critical health and development issues—from stopping the spread of HIV to improving reproductive health and ensuring that young people lead full and productive lives. Through biomedical, social science, and public health research in 50 countries, we work with our partners to deliver solutions that lead to more effective policies, programs, and technologies that

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improve lives around the world. Established in 1952 and headquartered in New York, the Council is a nongovernmental, nonprofit organization governed by an international board of trustees.

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