



Webinar:

Oral PrEP Implementation and Implications for Next Generation PrEP

In January 2022, AVAC convened partners to discuss insights from oral PrEP programs and how these experiences could inform faster, smarter and more affordable rollout of next-generation HIV prevention products, including the Dapivirine Vaginal Ring and injectable cabotegravir.

There's a lot of groundwork that's already been done with regard to oral PrEP and we shouldn't start from scratch, by any means. We need to learn from mistakes and do this a lot faster

– Saiqa Mullick, Wits RHI

Presenters shared insights from South Africa, Kenya and Zimbabwe, followed by questions from a global audience of implementers and advocates.

- AVAC's Jessica Rodrigues opened the meeting with background on PrEP uptake globally and regionally, noting that due to rapid scale-up, approximately 69% of cumulative PrEP initiations have now occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Saiqa Mullick of Wits RHI shared lessons from South Africa's experience scaling up oral PrEP from 2016, when PrEP was offered only to sex workers at a handful of clinics, to 2021, with PrEP broadly available in more than 2,000 public health facilities.
- Daniel Were of Jhpiego described the Jilinde Project's successful efforts to increase demand and dismantle stigma surrounding PrEP.
- Joseph Murungu of Pangaea Zimbabwe AIDS Trust (PZAT) shared a dynamic, client-centered approach to ensure that PrEP programs respond to the needs of young people.

Taken together, presentations and discussion highlighted key themes including:

1. Options are essential: to make PrEP attractive and accessible, we need to make more products available, from more providers, in more places.

What came out number one was that [young people] really need choices in terms of the products available, not just to be pushed into one product. [...] Then, [...] they'll be happy to have a choice in terms of where to access the services [and] who to access services from. We have nurses, we have counselors, we have the PrEP champions, it shouldn't be just one option [...] in terms of who's providing the service and where the services are being accessed."

– Joseph Murungu, PZAT Zimbabwe

2. Promoting PrEP “for everyone” helps reduce stigma and shows communities how to better support PrEP users.

We [...] know that the introduction of PrEP for certain populations may increase stigma and act as a barrier for uptake, and so socializing PrEP for the general population and increasing awareness, combined with tailored approaches and messages for different populations [...] is really key.

– Jessica Rodrigues, AVAC

While we will reach out to some of the PrEP indicated populations through targeted demand creation, I think it’s important to acknowledge and appreciate that these users live within communities, and if the communities are not receptive and supportive of HIV prevention interventions then ultimately this results in both low PrEP uptake as well as low continuation. [...] What I want to emphasize here is the essence of investing in surround sound marketing.

– Daniel Were, Jhpiego

3. PrEP should be integrated with other health care services – not just at the point of delivery but across the spectrum including product research and development, policy guidelines, supply chains, marketing and training.

It’s important to integrate at the service delivery point. But, also, we need an integrated approach to all the other pieces. We need an integrated approach to capacity building for the health workers. [...] We need an integrated approach to demand creation. [...] Supply chain. So all the system elements will need to be redesigned so that they support the integrated service delivery approach.

– Joseph Murungu, PZAT Zimbabwe

4. The concept of effective PrEP use and measures of PrEP impact need to be redefined.

There’s a need to [...] relook at the indicators [...] in line with [...] the family planning field where you use a method when you need it and then you’re off and there’s no judgment, you know when you need to be on one or not. [...] To look at [...] things like volume dispensed or person-years on PrEP and really be able to use some of that information more effectively for predicting demand, but also to estimate coverage in different populations.

– Saiqa Mullick, Wits RHI

The other limitation that is not captured by the current indicators is even as some of these users switch from PrEP it's likely they are switching to other prevention interventions. [...] As we increase the method mix, then that is what needs to be captured [...]: is this user actually covered such that we are effectively preventing a new infection, whether through PrEP or through another intervention.

— Daniel Were, Jhpiego

The webinar was part of the HIV Prevention Market Manager (PMM), led from 2016-2021 by AVAC and The Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which worked with partners to expand the portfolio of HIV prevention options and ensure appropriate products are available, accessible and used. The PMM generated key insights into HIV prevention programming, centering the people who most need, want and can use prevention, including the identification of motivators and barriers to product use and adherence. PMM also supported evidence-based PrEP implementation in multiple countries and catalyzed solutions to improve HIV prevention delivery and monitoring of PrEP impact.

This is not a single webinar; this is part of a journey that we're all on [...], across different geographies and populations and products and programs, to really work towards impact.

— Mitchell Warren, AVAC

Related PMM and PrEP resources include:

- **Report:** [Lessons from Oral PrEP Programs and their Implications for Next Generation Prevention](#)
- **Issue briefs** featuring key PrEP learnings:
 - [Simplifying and improving delivery](#)
 - [Reframing risk](#)
 - [Generating demand](#)
 - [Monitoring and evaluation for next-generation PrEP](#)
- **Resource hub:** [PrEP Watch](#)
- **Data hub:** [Global PrEP Tracker](#)