

Testing service delivery models for effective initiation and retention on Pre-exposure Prophylaxis among barmaids in Dar es Salaam: a randomized trial

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In 2015, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended the use of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) as part of a comprehensive HIV prevention package for those at greatest risk for HIV acquisition. Barmaids, women who serve alcohol to customers, are one such high-risk group: in pilot work we found that 50% of Dar es Salaam barmaids questioned had had sex in return for money, but HIV prevalence was only 7%.

We will therefore conduct a double-randomized implementation trial to evaluate the relative effectiveness of PrEP delivery methods. We will visit barmaids at their bars, inviting them to conduct HIV testing and counselling. Those who test negative will be invited to participate in the trial which will involve 6 months of PrEP provision. The first randomization will be bar-level to either standard of care facility-based PrEP or workplace-based PrEP where services are provided at the bar. The second randomization will be to either receive or not receive SMS reminder to attend clinic visits. The trial should take no more than 12 months to complete.

The project is a cooperation between the University of Heidelberg and MDH, a Tanzanian NGO with substantial experience conducting HIV-related evaluation. The project would involve supporting study implementation in Tanzania, as well as conducting analyses of the data collected. The student would be supported in turn by several senior researchers at Heidelberg, Harvard and UCL.

A strong command of English, sensitivity to other cultures, self-organization, the ability to solve problems as they arise and basic quantitative skills are necessary. A demonstrated interest in HIV, women's or global health and prior experience using Stata or R are desirable. Knowledge of Swahili would be wonderful.

Cooperating partners: Management and Development for Health (MDH); National AIDS Control Program (Tanzania); Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health; University College London