CQUIN 7th Annual Meeting
November 13-17, 2023
Sandton, South Africa

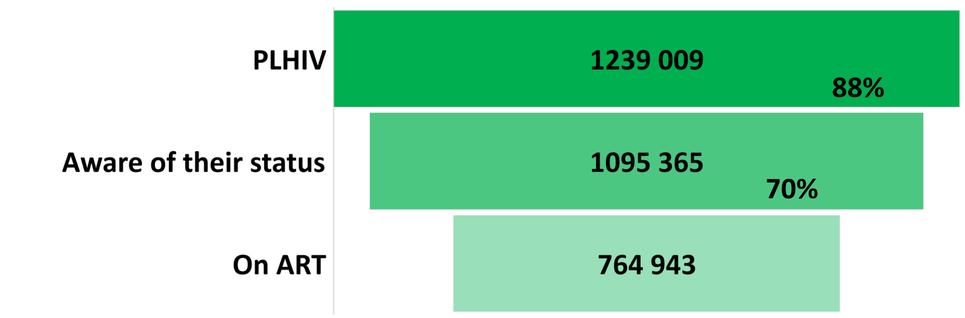
Uptake of the HIV self-screening modality amongst the youth 18-29 years in South Africa

A Marsh[1], T Chidarikire[1], T Silere-Maqetseba[1], T Maomela[2], Z Kwinda[3]
[1]The National Department of Health, Pretoria, South Africa, [2]Clinton Health Access, Pretoria, South Africa,

Background

- South Africa (SA) has the highest number of people infected with HIV globally, with the fourth-highest adult HIV prevalence rate of 13%.
- South Africa committed to the United Nations 95:95:95 strategy to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030 which involves scaling up a combination HIV prevention interventions.
- The National Department of Health (NDOH) introduced HIV self-screening (HIVSS) as an additional testing modality to close the testing gap for hard-to-reach populations including key populations, men and youth.
- HIVSS has proven to be a critical modality to increase the adoption of HIV prevention and treatment.
- NDOH had initially targeted to implement the modality in 222 health care facilities within the country based on resources.
- However, at the end of 2022, **approximately 900 health care facilities** were implementing the modality due to the increased demand and partner support from communities, especially amongst youth.

Figure 1: Cascade for young people 18-29 years in South Africa, source: Naomi model



We describe the reach of the HIVSS test kits, the screening results, and outcomes of implementing HIVSS in South Africa amongst youth between April 2021 - September 2022.

Methods

- Descriptive statistics were used to summarise the HIVSS distribution and outcomes.
- The data was extracted from the national monthly HIVSS database.
- Funding for the test kits procurement was through the national DOH RT41 tender.

Results

- 639 877 HIVSS kits were distributed amongst young adults aged 18 to 29 years.
- More female (66.2%) clients compared to males (33.6%), and 0.1% to other sex.

Figure 2: Distribution by gender

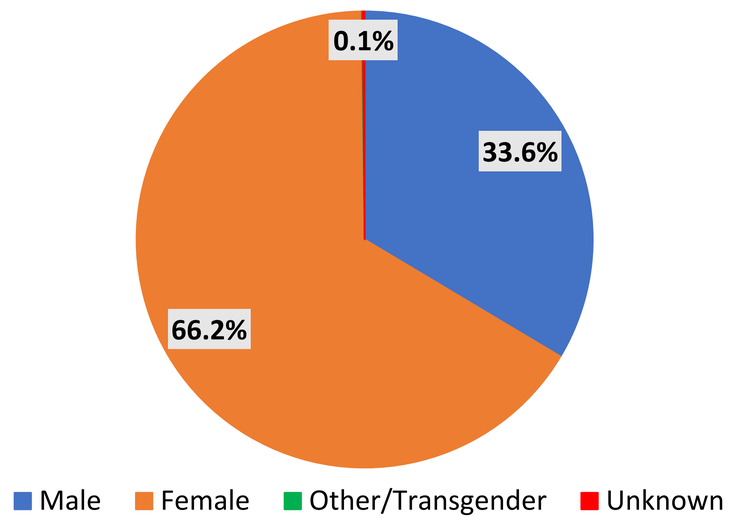


Figure 3: HIVSS kits distributed by province

288,664 kits (44.6%) were distributed in KZN and 145,258 (22.4%) in Gauteng

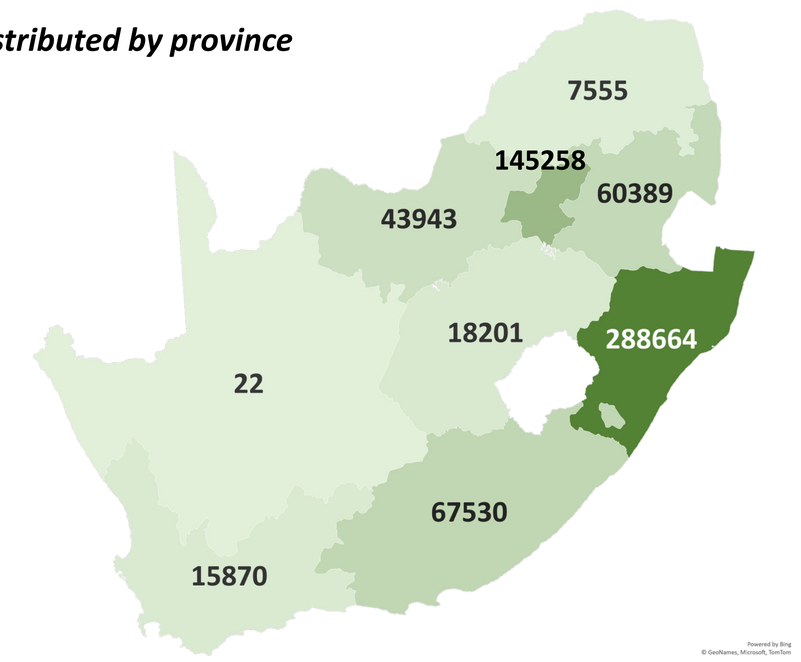


Figure 4: Distribution channels

Two thirds of kits were distributed through facilities

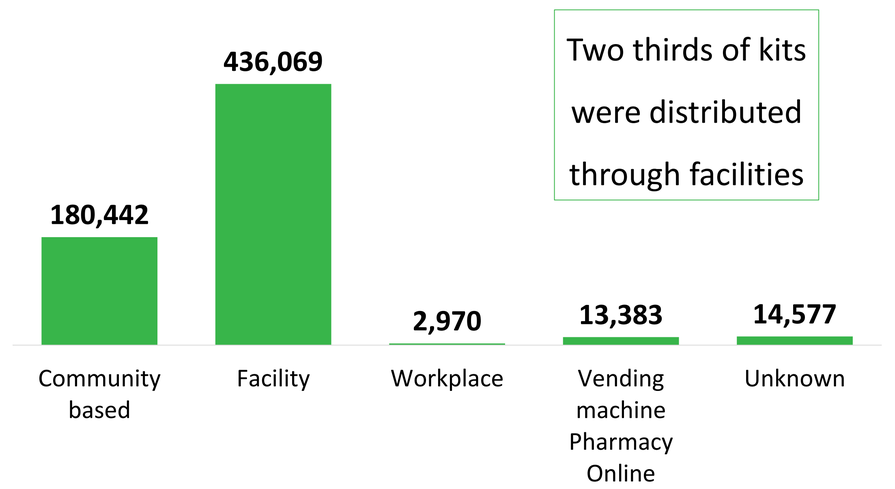
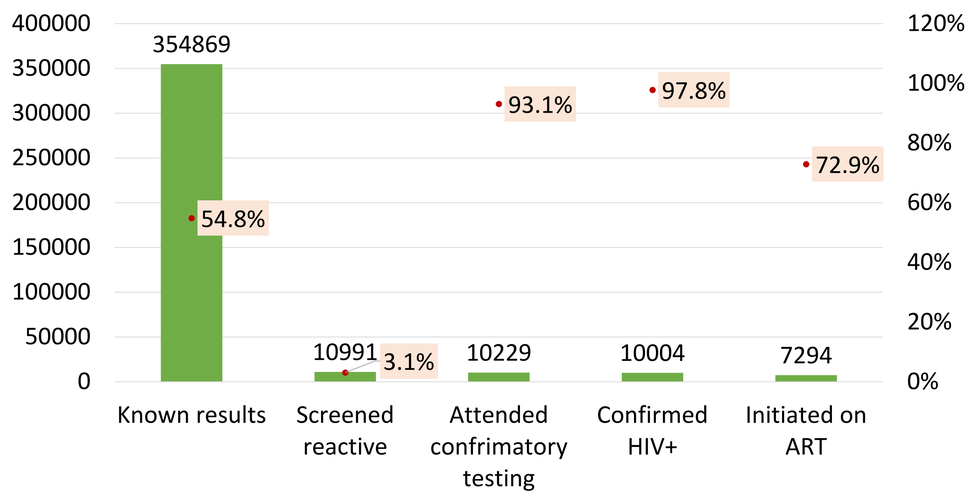


Figure 5: HIVSS outcome cascade



- More than half (54.8%) of the distributed kits have known results
- **Positivity rate was 3.1%**
- **ART initiation rate was 72.9%** amongst newly diagnosed patients

Conclusions

The results show that HIVSS is a modality that is reaching the youth aged 18-29 years. However, more young people living with HIV could be reached if distribution models are expanded out of facilities, such as into schools, higher health institutions, and workplaces. Social media and social mobilization campaigns should be strengthened. Continuous capacitation and mentorship should be provided to the HCWs , peer educators and CHWs on HIVSS to ensure the stability of the modality.

Acknowledgements

1. The National Department of Health
2. Clinton Health Access Initiative

alarice.marsh@health.gov.za