

Utilizing PrEP-to-Need Ratio (PnR) to estimate PrEP coverage among Key Population (KPs) in three high HIV incidence districts of Namibia.

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Background

The World Health Organization recommends use of HIV oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for people at substantial risk of acquiring HIV. For the general population, among adults, Namibia's annual HIV incidence rate was 0.4% in 2017. Despite rapid programmatic scale-up, PrEP use remains low among men who have sex with men (MSM) and female sex workers (FSWs). To inform programmatic targeting, the KP-STAR project, funded by PEPFAR through USAID and implemented by IntraHealth Namibia, used PrEP-to-need ratio (PnR) to describe ecological differences in PrEP use among MSM and FSWs in three Namibian districts.

Methods

Between October 2019-September 2020, we collected the number of unique PrEP users among MSM and FSWs in Katima Mulilo, Windhoek, and Walvis Bay/Swakopmund districts. For the same period, we analyzed the need for PrEP using number of HIV diagnosis data among MSM and FSWs to calculate PnR. Using population size estimates from the Namibia biobehavioral survey we established PrEP users per 100,000 population for each district.

Results

Among MSM for each new HIV diagnosis, there were 6.7, and 2.9 PrEP users in Windhoek and Walvis Bay, respectively. Among FSWs there were 5.6, 1.9, and 2.8 PrEP users in Windhoek, Katima Mulilo, and Walvis Bay, respectively.

Conclusions

In general, the higher the PnR, the greater the PrEP use. The high PnR in Windhoek, the capital city where there is more diversity, is encouraging; more HIV-negative MSM and FSWs are on PrEP for every newly diagnosed HIV-positive. This may also reflect availability of resources and information compared to peripheral districts. The low PnR in Katima Mulilo, the district with the highest HIV prevalence in the entire country, is reason for concern. Ensuring that those at risk of contracting HIV are commenced on PrEP is an important intervention especially in Katima Mulilo. Intensifying PrEP eligibility screening and linkages for FSWs, the biggest group among key populations in the country, is required in these districts.

District		Number of PrEP users	per 100,000 population	number of HIV diagnosis	per 100,000 population	PrEP to need ratio (PnR)	Est. Population (COP19 datapack)
Windhoek	MSM	248	11221.7	37	1674.2	6.7	2,210
	FSWs	398	18123.9	71	3233.2	5.6	2,196
Katima Mulilo	MSM	0		0			-
	FSWs	212	31454.0	111	16468.8	1.9	674
Walvis Bay	MSM	82	12238.8	28	4179.1	2.9	670
	FSWs	141	13339.6	50	4730.4	2.8	1,057

