



International Conference on Family Planning 2022

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Submission ID : ICFP705

Utilizing mobile digital platforms to connect adolescent girls and young women to subsidized contraception in pharmacies in Kenya

Submission Topic : Expanding
access to family planning

Submission Status : Accepted

Submission Type : Accepted: Poster
Presentation

Public-private partnership to expand
access

Which Of The Following Does Your Abstract Address? : Program/Best Practice

Significance/background : Pharmacies offer easy access to a number of common contraceptive methods including condoms, oral contraceptive pills, and emergency contraception in Kenya. Pharmacies are conveniently located in the heart of communities, with long opening hours and trained staff on site who reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. They also provide a safe haven for individuals seeking anonymous and informal advice from a trusted professional without having to make an appointment, especially for populations living in the most deprived areas. In addition research conducted among adolescent girls and women aged 15-19 identified these as a preferred channel for access of short term contraceptive methods due to the provider bias this population faces in often congested public health facilities. However, affordability (adolescents cannot afford to pay) and inconsistent quality of counseling by pharmacists have resulted in them being an unleveraged mechanism for this population in Kenya

Program Intervention/activity Tested : Triggerise implements a digital platform (called Tiko) that connects adolescent girls and young women to a network of quality assured private providers including pharmacies in which they can access free or subsidized contraception. To date over 838,001 have enrolled on the platform since its launch in 2017, with 609,129 (73%) accessing services. There are several ways to access the digital platform: girls with their own phones can either be assisted by community agents or self register on the platform via sms. Those without phones are registered by community agents using a card with a QR code

Methodology : Tiko is active within 16 counties in Kenya. Community mobilisers engage with AGYWs aged 15-19 to register them on the platform and refer them for SRH services. AGYWs can access a range of free or subsidized SRH services by trained providers at Tiko accredited pharmacies including all short term contraceptive methods, and HIV, STI and pregnancy testing. Different options are available for AGYW to access the platform: high technology (smartphone application), low technology (SMS application) or no technology (Tiko card). This ensures that any AGYW can interact with the platform regardless of their own level of access to technology. This intervention has been implemented since 2017. When an AGYW visits a pharmacy to request a service a "validation" is performed. An AGYW sends an SMS "trigger" to the Tiko platform. Tiko responds by sending a code that the service provider uses to validate that they have given the service. Tiko records this validation, capturing data on the user and the service they chose. As mentioned above, they are also prompted to rate the services received for which they are rewarded with loyalty points that they can redeem at an accredited retailer. There are currently 87 pharmacies on the platform

Results/key Findings : Since inception to date, 108,643 AGYWs accessed contraception at 110 Tiko accredited pharmacies. The contraceptive mix comprises: 92% oral contraceptives, 6% injectables (Sayana press) and 2% emergency contraception. 15% of users were aged 15, 28% were aged 16, 29% were aged 17, 27% aged 18 and 15% aged 19. As condoms are widely available within Kenya through Global Fund and Pepfar investments, condoms were not offered on the platform. As the data indicates, young AGYWs are quite comfortable accessing contraception at pharmacies.

66% of the AGYWs that accessed contraception at pharmacies rated their experience. Over 73,116 who rated services, 93.97% were greatly satisfied with the service they received from their provider (rating of 5 out of 5). Overall Average rating was 4.86%. 97% reported being informed about other methods of contraception available to them, 96% reported being informed about side effects and 97% reported being informed about what to do if they experienced side effects for the methods they accessed that day.

Program Implications/lessons Learned : Pharmacies are a trusted source of over-the-counter family planning supplies, including pregnancy tests, condoms, and emergency contraception and should be considered an important alternative contraception source for AGYW in Kenya. Insights generated from qualitative studies with girls on the digital platform also suggest that pharmacies meet the 5 tenets of quality including accessibility, acceptability, appropriateness, effectiveness

and equity if services are subsidized or provided free.

Nevertheless the breadth of contraception available in many pharmacies remains narrow, primarily focused on short term contraception. The Tiko platform also includes 192 accredited clinics that offer long term contraception and AGYW who desire long term methods are referred to these clinics. It is essential that interventions that are designed and implemented with pharmacies also include linkages and referrals to long term methods through both private and public (for those who cannot afford) clinics.

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