



Understanding that the needs of key population (KP) groups are sensitive and intricate, APIN Public Health Initiatives, through the Key Population Investment Fund (KPIF) from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), set up the Key Population One Stop Shops (OSS) to provide comprehensive, individualized health care to KP clients in a friendly, conducive and safe environment.

Early in the operations of the KP OSS, it became evident that an innovative solution was needed to address the challenges of poor retention rates, high interruption in treatment (IIT) and low uptake of viral load assessment among KP groups. This led to the development of the Key Populations Call Centre (KPCC), a unique feature of the KP OSS, which uses an innovative data- and technology-based solution called the Key Populations Call Center (KPCC) application to coordinate the delivery of clinical and psychosocial interventions.

The KPCC application has several capabilities which allows the trained KP-sensitive call agents at the Call Centre to communicate with clients, counsel them, provide referrals to service delivery points within the OSS, conduct Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities via social media while tracking and monitoring clients' clinic appointments.



An interesting feature of the KPCC app is that it is fully integrated with the Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system, which is a database of all clients on treatment with essential information such as contact details, appointments and viral load assessment results. This integration allows the app to automatically generate the dates of the next appointment for each client and send out a reminder message a day before the appointment. It also ensures that the call center agents could monitor and track defaulters and clients interrupted in

treatment (IIT) and fast-track the collection of viral load samples. The KPCC and OSS teams reached out to all clients who had missed scheduled clinical appointments via voice calls 24 hours after the missed appointment and also tracked clients interrupted in treatment after 28 days.

Through the KP call center and the KPCC app, the program provided psychosocial support to KPs on Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) through affirmative calls to KPs on their birthdays and feedback calls to disclose treatment outcomes. In collaboration with the OSS KP peer navigator, and KP Community Based Organizations (CBOs), the team employed home visits and the buddy system (treatment partners) to track KP clients without phone numbers especially in hard-to-reach areas. This helped support data availability and validation as all the information obtained from calls and home visits was shared with the OSS Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team to update the EMR.

The Dial that Brought Ricky Back to Life

Ricky is a middle-aged PWID on treatment at one of the Key Population One-Stop Shops in Benue State. Ricky missed his clinical appointment and became interrupted in treatment on the ART program. Through his treatment support partner, the KP call center agents found out in the process of tracking through calls that Ricky was bedridden and unable to keep up with his scheduled clinical appointment as he was also down with symptoms of TB. The KP OSS team was alerted and immediately catered to Ricky's needs in addition to referring him to a TB Dot Center where he received adequate medical attention. Ricky is recuperating, he is happy that the KP Call center agents *“found him out when no one else could”*. Ricky is thankful that the KP call center made that dial that brought him back to life.

“I feel happy and encouraged to know that someone still cares about my wellbeing. APIN OSS, you have won my heart”

- Dooshima on the positive affirmative calls from the KP call center on her birthday.



The KP call center interventions have considerably improved outputs on the treatment cascade. Implementation of pre-appointment reminders has progressively improved viral sample coverage on the program. From a sample collection rate of 99% (5171 samples out of 5235), the program moved to 99.5% (5458 out of 5483) sample collection rate. Call center interventions also facilitated the return of 595 out of 893 (71%) clients scheduled for clinical appointments between April to June, 2022. The strategy has also eased/ improved access to care and support services for KP clients on ART.

Helping Wandoo Stay Virally Suppressed

Wandoo, a Female Sex Worker (FSW), was contacted by the KP Call Center because her viral load assessment results came back as unsuppressed. She was referred for six months of Enhanced Adherence Counselling (EAC). She went through all her EAC sessions, was re-bled and waited anxiously to receive the outcome of her viral load test.

When the KP call center, agent called her and told her that she was virally suppressed, Wandoo was delighted. She explained that her experience had made her adopt some healthy habits to change the result.

She also said that the support and appointment reminders that she received from the call center had helped her keep up with her clinical appointments.



Public Health Initiatives

