

# EFFECTIVENESS OF SAFE HARM REDUCTION SPACES FOR PERSONS WHO INJECT DRUGS LIVING WITH HIV AND VIRAL HEPATITIS CO-INFECTIONS IN LAGOS, NIGERIA

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## **Background:**

To reduce impact of inadequate access to Viral hepatitis treatment services amongst People Who Inject Drugs (PWIDs) living with HIV through strengthening local capacity of PWID community-led services to promote safe healthy spaces.

From current information from the WHO viral hepatitis B&C is a deadly contagious virus which has more virulence and devastating complications than HIV. However, there is no national prevalence study on Hep B&C in Nigeria conducted till date due to criminalization of PWID safe spaces and hindering advocacy for access to treatment support.

## **Description of Model of Care:**

Using success gained from our harm reduction community awareness program in previous sites in Lagos state- Nigeria, NNPUD trained and engaged the services of 10 PWIDs\_LHIV /HBV role models from the 10 allotted districts. They were trained in community-based harm reduction and encouraged to form 10 support groups of 20 PWIDs\_LHIV/HBV each. They were serviced with lists (phone numbers, locations) of defaulters. Their activities on a weekly basis included:

- Linkages of PWID\_LHIV to peer support groups for effective messaging on viral hepatitis.
- Escort services to HIV/Viral Hepatitis treatment department in the health facilities to reduce stigma.
- Scaling up of Condom/Lubricants/Needle/Syringes Distribution.
- Home based support services.

## **Effectiveness:**

At the end of the 9months:

90% of 200PWID\_LHIV/HBV clients reached willingly allowed their sexual partners to access HIV/Viral Hepatitis testing & treatment if identified HIV positive.

90% of 200PWID\_LHIV/HBV clients reached willingly re-enrolled into HIV/Viral Hepatitis Treatment.

90% of 200PWID\_LHIV/HBV clients on HIV /Hepatitis Treatment reached achieved Viral suppression.

90% of 200PWID\_LHIV/HBV clients reached are knowledgeable in HIV/Viral Hepatitis Treatment Adherence Literacy.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps:**

MHRFP-N created a learning platform promote advocacy for safe spaces for community support groups of PWIDs\_LHIV/HBV which enhanced behavior change.

We will be advocating for effective treatment access by promoting community-led organizing of affected community.

**Disclosure of Interest:** None