



SMS Surveys for Assessing PrEP Adherence and Sexual Behavior:

A highly acceptable survey method among HIV-uninfected members of sero-discordant couples in East Africa

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Disclosures

- ❖ No real or apparent conflicts of interest to report

Background

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- PrEP efficacy is highly dependent on adherence^{1,2}
- Data from the Partners PrEP Study showed adherence was high 82% by drug detection within HIV serodiscordant couples in East Africa³



1. Haberer J ,et al. IAPAC 2014
2. Celum C, et al. Current Opinion 2012
3. Baeten JM, et al. NEJM 2012

Rationale

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- Given the wide availability of cellular phones globally, SMS surveys are a promising method for data collection in research studies^{4,5,6}
- Acceptability of questions on PrEP adherence and sexual behavior, however, is unclear

4. Whitford HM et al. JAMIA 2012

5. Haberer J et al. AIDS 2013

6. Curran K et al. AIDS & Behavior 2012



METHODS

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Partners Demonstration Project

Open label study of integrated PrEP and ART among high risk HIV serodiscordant couples in East Africa

Partners Mobile Adherence to PrEP (PMAP)

A sub-study of the Partners Demonstration Project

- ❖ SMS surveys on PrEP adherence and sexual behavior were sent daily to HIV negative partner on PrEP for two weeks around each scheduled quarterly study visit
- ❖ A small incentive (~\$0.50 airtime) was provided for survey completion
- ❖ SMS surveys were free



Questions in the PMAP SMS Survey

Enrollment		Months								
0		1	2	3	4	5	6	etc		
PrEP given (1 mo)		PrEP given (3 mo)				PrEP given (3 mo)				
Survey training period		SMS survey				SMS survey				SMS survey

SMS #1: What is your password?

SMS #2: Since this time yesterday, did you have sex? Enter 1 for 'yes' or 0 for 'no'.

...

SMS #7: Did you take your study pill since this time yesterday? Enter 1 for 'yes' or 0 for 'no'.



Data Collection

- ❖ Questionnaires on SMS survey acceptability after study exit
- ❖ A convenience sample of PMAP participants.
- ❖ Quantitative and qualitative semi-structured, in-depth interviews
 - Experiences
 - Likes/dislikes
 - Challenges
 - Confidentiality
 - Preferences for future SMS
 - Recommendation for others



Analysis

- ❖ Participant characteristics and responses assessed descriptively
- ❖ Chi Square and Fisher exact to assess SMS challenges by age, gender, education
- ❖ Thematic analysis identified concepts related to experiences and perceptions of the text message surveys (Ngure et al. Poster #110)

RESULTS

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N=393 enrolled in PMAP (39% of 1,013 in the Partners Demonstration Project)

Characteristics N=104 (26% of PMAP participants)	N (%) or median (IQR)
Age (years)	29 (25, 36)
Female	40 (38)
Education (years)	10 (7, 12)
Electricity in home	69 (66)
Number of rooms in home	1 (1, 2)
Number of persons in household	3 (2, 4)



Likes and Dislikes

- ❖ Participants that felt completing the SMS surveys was “easy” or “very easy” - 94%
- ❖ Reported at least 1 dislike (N=13)
 - “questions were repetitive” - 4%
associated with high education ($p=0.03$)
 - “questions were offensive” - 3%



Challenges

- ❖ Reported challenges (N=27)
 - Mobile network interruptions - 37%
 - Handset challenges - 26%
 - Wanted additional airtime incentive - 15%
 - Time consuming activity- 4%
 - Other challenges
- ❖ Participants >35 years were more likely to report challenges with surveys ($p < 0.001$)
- ❖ Women had more challenges with their handsets ($p = 0.01$)



Confidentiality

- ❖ SMS surveys seen by other person - 81%
 - Of those 2% were bothered by it

- ❖ Received assistance with SMS surveys - 8%



Preferences

- ❖ Preferences for the number of questions
 - Would answer more - 35%
 - Just right - 57%
 - Too many - 8%
- ❖ Preferred SMS surveys to in-person interviews - 67%
- ❖ Preferred SMS surveys compared to clinic visits - 79%
- ❖ Preference for future SMS surveys
 - Daily - 54%
 - Periodic - 38%
 - Either/no preference - 8%



Future SMS Surveys

❖ Duration

- Up to 1 month - 25%
- Up to 3 months - 29%
- Up to 6 months - 15%
- More than 6 months - 31%

❖ Willingness to participate again - 95%

❖ Recommendation to a friend - 93%



Conclusions

- Acceptability for SMS surveys assessing PrEP adherence and sexual behavior was generally high among HIV-uninfected members of serodiscordant couples in East Africa
- Most participants reported positive experiences with SMS surveys to answer questions related PrEP adherence and sexual behavior
- Similar surveys should be considered for further studies (and possibly clinical care) to understand the context of PrEP use



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2. Partners Demonstration Project Team

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THANK YOU

QUESTIONS?

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