

Home- versus mobile clinic-based HIV testing and counseling in rural Africa

December 16 2014

Home- and community-based HIV testing and counselling services can achieve high participation uptake in rural Africa but reach different populations within a community and should be provided depending on the groups that are being targeted, according to new research published in this week's *PLOS Medicine* by Niklaus Labhardt from the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, and colleagues from SolidarMed, a Swiss non-governmental Organization for Health in Africa.

Annually, about 2.3 million people become newly infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. A key step in receiving treatment for HIV and reducing further transmission of the virus is receiving HIV testing and counselling, but in countries where HIV is prevalent, such as many parts of rural Africa, access to these services can be limited by resources or because people fear stigmatization and discrimination. One option to improve HIV testing and counselling coverage is to provide this [service](#) to individuals in a community setting as part of a campaign that provides multiple health services (for example, family planning, TB screening and blood-pressure measurement) instead of relying on individuals visiting health facilities to be tested. However, the evidence base for how to deliver these services to [test](#) different populations is poor.

In a cluster randomized controlled trial in rural Lesotho the authors tested two different community approaches for delivering the same HIV testing and counselling services; in one individuals were offered the services in their homes, and in another services were offered at a mobile clinic that was set up at a community gathering. The study included 2563

participants and the authors found that uptake of HIV testing and counselling was higher for those offered home-based services compared to services at the mobile clinic (92.5% and 86.7%, respectively). By analysing this outcome by age the authors noted that there was a large difference in uptake among children

Citation: Home- versus mobile clinic-based HIV testing and counseling in rural Africa (2014, December 16) retrieved 13 February 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-12-home-mobile-clinic-based-hiv-rural.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.