

Developing and Sustaining Mobile Health Clinics for HIV Treatment and Prevention

Sustaining effective HIV treatment and prevention is challenged by the need to maintain consistent engagement in care over the long term and satisfy the diverse needs of communities affected by HIV. This requires overcoming barriers to engagement such as limited access to transportation and medical providers. **As longer-acting options for HIV treatment and PrEP become available, addressing barriers to HIV treatment and prevention will require going beyond brick-and-mortar clinic settings. Mobile health clinics offer an opportunity to combine the promise of these modalities for greater flexibility with novel engagement methods.** Given the competing time demands and personal priorities, HIV treatment and prevention are often not the primary drivers of engagement in healthcare. Mobile health clinics seeking to deliver HIV treatment and PrEP should serve as low-barrier entry points to address the needs of people living with or at risk for HIV by providing medical and social services that people most often seek. Clinics that deliver a wide range of services and build trust among communities most impacted by HIV are more likely to see engagement with HIV treatment and prevention services.

SERVICES PEOPLE SEEK FROM MOBILE HEALTH CLINICS

A mobile health pharmacy in Connecticut provides an illustrative example of the types of services mobile health clinics provide, showing that underserved communities are seeking medications provided by primary care services. These communities would benefit from HIV testing, PrEP and treatment initiation; however, they are not primarily seeking those services.

Medical Purpose of Drug	Percentage
Diabetes	21.1
Anxiety and Other Mental Health	18.8
Hypertension	13.3
Pain	5.7
Hyperlipidemia	5.0
Vaccination	3.7
Pulmonary Conditions	3.5
Opioid Use	1.9
HIV Prevention (PrEP)	1.4
HIV Treatment (ART)	1.3
Alcohol Use (AUD)	1.2
Other	23.1

Source: InMOTION Mobile Pharmacy and Clinic, Yale School of Medicine.

POLICY ACTIONS FOR EXPANDING MOBILE HEALTH FOR HIV TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

Mobile health clinics are widespread but their use for HIV treatment and prevention is limited. Policy actions can help the HIV community effectively reach populations impacted by HIV using mobile health clinics.

MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

- Conduct community needs assessments to identify HIV services priorities
- Establish partnerships between HIV organizations and primary care providers to operate mobile health units
- Foster collaboration among mobile health clinics providing HIV treatment and prevention

USE RESEARCH AND DATA TO OPTIMIZE MOBILE HEALTH

- Utilize existing data sources to identify where to prioritize mobile health clinics
- Develop data sharing agreements across agencies and organizations to integrate care for recipients of mobile health services
- Evaluate mobile health HIV prevention and treatment services delivery to increase impact
- Collect data to articulate the benefits and cost-effectiveness of expanded mobile health clinics

SUSTAIN ADEQUATE FINANCING FOR MOBILE HEALTH

- Leverage philanthropic funding as bridge support until sustainable streams are established
- States must take action to maximize current billing and reimbursement mechanisms