

Community Health Commodities Distribution of integrated HIV and Non-Communicable Disease Services during COVID-19 Pandemic - Eswatini Case Study

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Abstract : Accessing health services during the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated scarcity to routine medication. To ensure continuous accessibility to services, Eswatini launched Community Health Commodities Distribution (CHCD). Eligible Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) stable clients (VL<1,000) and patients on Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) medications were attended at community pick up points (PUP) based on distance between clients' residence and the public health facility. Services provided includes ART and Pre-Exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) refills and NCD drug refills). The number of community PUP was 14% higher than health facility visits. Among all medications and commodities distributed between April and October 2020 at the PUP, 64% were HIV-related (HIV rapid test, HIVST, VL test, PrEP meds), and 36% were NCD related. The rapid roll out of CHCD during COVID-19 pandemic reduced the risk of COVID-19 transmission to clients as travel to health facilities was eliminated. It Additionally increased access to commodities during COVID-19-driven lockdown, decongested health facilities, integrated model of care, and increase service coverage. It was also noted that CHCD added different curative and HIV related services based on client specific needs and availability of the commodities.

Keywords : community health commodities distribution, pick up points, antiretroviral therapy, pre-exposure prophylaxis

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