A searchable, online global PrEP provider directory and country-specific PrEP resources for consumers and providers: The PleasePrEPMe.Globalization Experience

Authors: Taft Weber-Kilpack1, Laura Marie Lazar1,2, and Shannon Weber1,2
1PleasePrEPMe.Global, 2PleasePrEPMe.Org, 3University of California, San Francisco

Visit www.pleaseprepme.global on a web browser to see the full website.

Background

PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) is a pill that prevents HIV acquisition. PrEP can be taken once daily or in timed dosages, and reduces the likelihood of contracting HIV by >90%. PrEP is an innovative technology that can be used openly or discreetly. The promise of PrEP is possible because of existing HIV infrastructure and decades-long work by research participants, clinicians, advocates, public health officials, researchers and communities. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) was recommended for people at substantial risk of HIV exposure by the World Health Organization (WHO) in September 2015. As PrEP implementation efforts expand, there is no central database to identify PrEP providers or country-specific PrEP resources.

Description

PleasePrEPMe.Global launched in May 2017 as a database of PrEP providers hosted as a searchable, web-based directory in the Google Maps platform. PleasePrEPMe.Global aims to be a hub for PrEP access by providing: 1) a searchable map of PrEP providers, 2) individual resource webpages for each country. The project is a crowd-sourced effort which relies on relationships with advocates to reach providers and PrEP users. To date, there are 535 PrEP provider listings in 29 countries with over 8,000 map views from 1,400 website users.

Statement of Solidarity

We believe PrEP is more than a pill — PrEP is one part of comprehensive HIV prevention. We believe in universal, expanded HIV treatment access. We believe in ending violence against LGBTQIA+ people, their partners, and their provider allies. We believe in decriminalizing sex work. We believe in decriminalizing HIV. We believe in decriminalizing homosexuality and same-gender love. We believe language matters — and language is part of our fight to end stigma. We believe in ending violence against women. We believe in universal access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health.

Lessons Learned

Preliminary iterations of the directory tested the layers function on the Google Map platform. Data is sorted by clinic type: public, private, demonstration study, clinical trial, resource center (Figure 2). Each location includes searchable tags with populations served: everyone, youth, adults, men who have sex with men (MSM), women, mixed-status couples, transgender people, sex workers, people who inject drugs. Fostering lasting relationships with PrEP champions in each country is key to the integration of clinic listings and resources. The initial database was built with three large datasets, followed by bulk uploads from four additional countries (Figure 1). A coordinated outreach campaign to PrEP demonstration sites was initiated in collaboration with AVAC. This process identified additional clinic listings and resources. General resources and country-specific resources are provided on the website in a variety of languages (Figure 3). Website analytics indicate PleasePrEPMe.Global is accessed in multiple languages. In order to support automated translation software, the website wording is now clear, simple, and direct.

Conclusions

PleasePrEPMe.Global has increased visibility of early-adopter PrEP providers and publicly available resources by providing easily accessible, curated, web-based information. Further outreach is needed to countries with approved PrEP and/or implementation projects for additional data. As website traffic increases, sharing user analytics with local and regional programs may provide an additional source of data to inform outreach and implementation efforts.