

## **MODULE 2 EXERCISE**

### INTRODUCTION TO HIV SELF-TESTING

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#### **OBJECTIVE**

This exercise will help health workers understand and apply the principles of HIV self-testing (HIVST), focusing on self-care principles, HIVST distribution models, and its integration within public health programs.

#### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By completing this exercise, participants will:

- Define HIVST and explain its alignment with self-care principles.
- Understand and compare HIVST distribution models (primary and secondary).
- Recognize the eligibility criteria for HIVST use and key considerations for different populations.
- Discuss the integration of HIVST with prevention services like PrEP and PEP.

#### **TAKEAWAY MESSAGE**

HIV self-testing (HIVST) is a transformative approach that empowers individuals by providing privacy, accessibility, and autonomy in learning their HIV status. It aligns with self-care principles, enhances case-finding, and supports HIV prevention and treatment goals. HIVST is an effective strategy in both community and facility-based settings and expands access to underserved populations.

#### **SCENARIO**

You are a health worker responsible for implementing HIVST services in your facility. Your role is to guide clients in using HIVST kits, ensure appropriate distribution models are used, and support linkage to care and prevention services.

## TASKS

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### 1. UNDERSTANDING HIVST AND SELF-CARE

#### Instructions:

- › Discuss the following as a group:
  - What is HIVST, and how does it align with self-care principles?
  - How does HIVST empower individuals to manage their health independently?
  - What populations could benefit most from HIVST?

#### Focus Areas:

- Highlight privacy, accessibility, and autonomy as key benefits.
- Discuss how HIVST expands testing coverage for hard-to-reach populations.

### 2. EXPLORING HIVST DISTRIBUTION MODELS

#### Instructions:

- › In groups of 3–4, choose one of the following HIVST distribution models:
  - Primary distribution (facility-based)
  - Secondary distribution (e.g., partner services, social network testing)
- › Develop a brief implementation plan using the *Differentiated HIV Testing Planning Tool* for your chosen model in a hypothetical setting.

#### Focus Areas:

- Discuss advantages and challenges of the model.
- Address how to ensure linkage to care for reactive results.

### 3. ROLE-PLAYING HIVST USE

#### Instructions:

- › Pair up for a role-play exercise:
  - One person acts as a client using an HIVST kit for the first time.
  - The other acts as a health worker providing instructions and support, including pretest information and post-test counselling
- › Demonstrate effective communication and counseling strategies.

#### Focus Areas:

- Clearly explain the steps for using oral-fluid and blood-based kits.
- Highlight the need for confirmatory testing for reactive results.
- Address common client concerns, such as reliability and confidentiality.

## 4. INTEGRATING HIVST WITH PREVENTION SERVICES

### Instructions:

- › Reflect individually on:
  - How can HIVST be integrated into PrEP initiation, PEP delivery, and VMMC services?
  - What challenges might arise, and how can they be addressed?
- › Share reflections in small groups and propose solutions.

### Discussion Points:

- How does HIVST support HIV-negative individuals in staying negative?
- What are the policy and health system considerations for integration?

## FINAL REFLECTION

### Instructions:

- › Individually reflect on:
  - How can you apply HIVST principles in your current setting?
  - What challenges do you foresee in implementing HIVST, and how would you address them?
- › Share reflections in a group discussion.

### Discussion Points:

- How can mobilization, distribution, and linkage be strengthened in HIVST programs?