

# Teen Clubs in Eswatini: A Foundation for Health and Belonging

The Luke Commission  
Sidvokodvo, Eswatini  
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# Background

- The Luke Commission (TLC) provides free, compassionate, comprehensive, client-centered health care to underserved populations in Eswatini
- TLC delivers health services from the fixed-site Miracle Campus and through mobile hospital outreaches, hosting over 117,000 patient visits annually
- Motivated by faith, TLC seeks to treat every patient as a beloved father, mother, brother, sister, or child



# Intervention: Teen Clubs

- Problem
  - Unique challenges faced by adolescents dealing with chronic illness
  - Lower viral suppression rates than adult population
- Solution: Intervention launched August 2018
- Focus
  - Treatment understanding, adherence, retention, viral load suppression for adolescents



# Target Audience

- Teen Clubs offer a supportive environment for differentiated service delivery (DSD) to HIV+ youth aged 8-24 through half-day events held on Saturdays
- Age bands (current attendance)
  - 8-14 (57)
  - 15-19 (97)
  - 20-24 (19)





# Goals

- To provide a safe and welcoming space for children and young adults to gain treatment knowledge, grow in life skills
- To encourage adherence among HIV+ youth by providing a stigma-free environment for receiving ARV refills







# Activities

- group singing
- games
- life skills trainings
- written personal reflections (reviewed by counsellors)
- ART refills
- opportunities to meet with counsellors as needed/requested, including stepped-up adherence counselling as needed





# Results: Viral Load Suppression (VLS)

	Total	F 10-14	F 15-19	F 20-24	M 10-14	M 15-19	M 20-24	VLS Rate
<b>TX_PVLS (FY18Q3)</b>								
Patients on ART with suppressed viral load results	145	15	32	29	23	31	15	88%
Patients with a viral load result documented	165	18	39	31	25	35	17	
	<b>88%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>88%</b>	
<b>TX_PVLS (FY21Q3)</b>								
Patients on ART with suppressed viral load results	342	30	67	131	35	40	39	92%
Patients with a viral load result documented	373	34	74	142	37	44	42	
	<b>92%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>93%</b>	

# Success Factors

- Comprehensive healthcare platform that includes all ages. This platform prioritises trust building between TLC and the patient. In turn, patients refer friends and family to TLC.
- Caring and committed staff who engage energetically and enthusiastically
- Transport sponsorship for eligible participants to defray transportation costs



# Scale-Up of the Intervention

- Initially, Teen Clubs were aimed at a narrower age band (8 to 13-year-olds and 14 to 19-year-olds).
- The program has since been expanded to include
  - youth as young as 5
  - an additional age band of 20-24 year olds, who meet separately, after noticing that this age group also seemed to struggle with adherence and viral suppression



# Resources

- Strengthening High-Impact Interventions for an AIDS-free Generation (AIDSFree) Project. 2016. *Swaziland Integrated Teen Club Curriculum: Teen Club Instructional Material for Adolescents—Sexual and Reproductive Health And HIV Care*. Arlington, VA: AIDSFree Project
- <https://www.pathfinder.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/YPLHIV-Compendium.pdf>





partnering to reach every last one

