Sex Workers and PrEP
What do you think about sex workers?

- When you think “sex worker” what comes to mind?
- Where do you see sex workers?
- Do you think sex work is a job?
- Have you ever had a sex worker as a patient?
Thinking out loud…

- What does sensitisation mean to you?

- Are there certain subgroups you think might need special attention?
Myths about sex workers

- Sex work is a choice
- Everyone in sex work loves sex
- They are immoral people
- They don’t know how to use HIV prevention methods
- They all take drugs and abuse alcohol
Sex workers in care

- What external stigma do sex workers experience?
- What internal stigma do they feel?
- What are the causes of this stigma?
- What (if any) discrimination occurs in the healthcare system?
Definitions

- Sex workers include **female, male and transgender adults** (18 years of age and above) who receive money or goods in exchange for sexual services, either regularly or occasionally.
- Sex work is consensual sex between adults, can take many forms, and varies between and within countries and communities.
- Sex work also varies in the degree to which it is more or less “formal”, or organised.
- As defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), children and adolescents under the age of 18 who exchange sex for money, goods or favours are “sexually exploited” and not defined as sex workers.
What do sex workers need?

- Respectful, non-judgemental, patient care
- Very important to listen
- Screening for STIs, TB, contraception, other NCD needs
- Possible referrals for post-rape care or legal support
- Frequent HIV testing (every 3 months recommended)
Why sex workers?

- HIV prevalence for FSW in South Africa: 59.8%*
- SW are prioritised as a population at **substantial risk** due to lack of power to insist on condoms, high rates of discrimination, gender based violence and rape, and lack of legal protection
- Existing platforms for healthcare delivery

Why sex workers? (I)

- There is high HIV prevalence amongst sex workers compared to general population
- HIV prevalence amongst SW 40%-60% compared to 13% general population
- Key population lack access to health services due to various reasons
- Sex workers contribute 20% to new infections
- HIV prevalence very high with 72%(JHB) 40%(CT) 54% (Ethekwini) from SAHMS 2012

Why sex workers? (II)

- SW are prioritised as a population at **substantial risk** due to lack of power to insist on condoms, high rates of discrimination, gender based violence and rape, and lack of legal protection
- Existing platforms for healthcare delivery

New Guidelines!
New National Plan!

THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL SEX WORKER HIV PLAN 2016 | 2019
What can sex workers use for HIV prevention?

- Abstinence?
- Fewer partners?
- Male condoms
- Female condoms
- Male circumcision
- PEP
- PrEP!
- Test and Treat!
Quotes from beneficiaries

“I feel that PrEP was introduced too late for me, I am already HIV positive”

“I am not going to worry anymore about condom bursting all the time, PrEP will protect me”

“You know there are those clients that comes mid month when you are not making money, and you risk not using a condom because they are going to pay more, its much better if you are on PrEP”
Quotes from beneficiaries II

“I do PrEP to stay healthy and safe for my children”

“I started PrEP as part of TAPS study and after 2 months was raped by a client, I have come back for test three times and am still negative”
Unintended consequences

- Stigma because it's offered to SW only
- General population accessing SW clinic SW might feel uncomfortable
- Target population might shift to overwhelmingly high numbers of general population accessing PrEP
- On truckers sites, truck drivers are not offered PrEP, yet they are high risk groups
Food for thought

- If a sex worker comes to see you, what will you offer her/him?
- How will you treat her/him?
- What will you say?
- Will you offer her/him PrEP?