

EFMC Saturates Kuje Area Council with HTC Services.

For the past weeks, Excellence and Friends Management Consult (EFMC) has been carrying out HIV/AIDS Testing and Counseling (HTC) services in Kuje Area Council of Abuja, FCT. This is essentially to bring Public Health services to the door steps of rural dwellers and saturate the Area council with HTC services. On the 25th February, 2014 it was the turn of Pasali in Kuje Area Council as a team of staff comprising of Dabis Mwalike, Aja Oti, Edward Adie, MaryAnn Iheakanwa, Joseph Aniah Fredrick Okhagwae, Abimbola, Philip, Helen, Janet and Daniel stormed community.



EFMC Community Team on arrival

Communities in Kuje Area Council will be reached out with HIV treatment, care, and the full range of prevention options through the gateway of HIV testing and counseling (HTC). Currently, most people in rural communities with HIV do not know that they are infected; those who do know often test late; and poor linkages from HTC to care mean that many people start Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) when they are already significantly immune-compromised, resulting in poor health

outcomes and ongoing transmission. EFMC has decisively

taken the bull by the horn by reaching out to remote communities in Kuje Area Council. In spite of the challenges of bad access roads and distances from one community to the other, the staffers of EFMC were unrelenting and undaunted. A successful Public Health response to HIV requires robust HTC services which is the hallmark of EFMC. At the same time, HTC requires successful linkages to HIV care and treatment; EFMC staffers handling the services in Kuje Area council were mindful of this and have factored it into the scheme of things.



Sharing of Kits for door to door HTC services

Again, the value of HTC depends on linking people to services that are acceptable, accessible, and effective. This is why the team on getting to Pasali Community in Kuje Area Council paid homage to the chief of the community in his palace before assembling at the Mango tree close the main road. At this juncture, the members of staff were paired in twos and Kits shared for carrying out door to door HTC activities, allowing

a team comprising of Dabis Mwalike and Abubakar Musa to render services to passers-by and people around.

Door-to-door HTC can serve hard-to-reach populations such as men, adolescents and rural residents and those underserved by the formal health care system in urban areas with high HIV prevalence and low rates of HTC uptake. The teams that went to different directions in the community to saturate it



Arranging the table for testing Clients

with HTC services have this at the back of their minds.

At about 2.00 pm Mr. Obison and Abubakar Musa went to Gaube and Pegi; two distant communities from Pasali for advocacy in respect of subsequent community based HTC services. On reaching Gaube, we met the chief, Alhaji Ibrahim who warmly received us. He even helped to describe the route/road to Pegi for us and gave the names of other adjoining communities.

Thereafter, we left for Pegi; another remote community quite far away from Gaube. The chief of Pegi;



Our Staff testing a client

Alhaji Irimia G. Sarki was not in his palace and we were referred to the palace secretary Mr. Danladi James Pegni. Mr. Pegni cordially received us as we told him the object of our mission and he pledged to pass the information to the chief and promised to support our mission.

It should be noted that the overall goal for HTC in Kuje Area Council is to identify as many people as possible with HIV early in their infection and link them successfully to prevention, care, and treatment services, and to link those who test negative to prevention services. Furthermore, monitoring, evaluating and reporting on these innovations will quicken the development of effective, evidence-based approaches in communities within Kuje Area Council with particular reference to door to door HTC services.



Staff testing a Client

At the end of HTC services in Pasali, a total number of *Six hundred and twelve* (612) people were tested. Of this number, three hundred and eighty four (384) were males and two hundred and twenty eight (228) were females. Four (4) reactive clients were referred. Pasali outreach was very remarkable.

Challenges: Not having the contact person at Kuje GH on seat to attend to reactive clients. This made one of the reactive clients bemoan his fate as he went there and couldn't be attended to as he was still in the stage of self-denial. He then got back to Dabis Mwalike and began to make trouble.



Staff doing door to door HTC

However, on the **26th Feb. 2014**, the team saturated Timber shed, Shetiko, Prison Road and Shikuku all in Kuje Area Council with HTC services. In spite of the bad access road and weather challenges, staffers were paired in twos for far – reaching community HTC outreach. The pairing of members of staff ensures that all nooks and crannies of any community visited for HTC services received adequate service delivery. This was the case of these small communities mentioned above. Though, some of them were distance away from each other, staff were encouraged by the fact that it is service to God and mankind.

Consequently, this scale – up HTC services yielded tremendous dividend as many people were reached with services even at their convenience. Seven hundred and eighteen (**718**) people were tested. Four and twenty four (**424**) of them were males, while two hundred and ninety four (**294**) were females. Five (5) reactive clients were referred.



In Timber Shed Kuje



Staff testing a client at her business point



Staff counseling a client