

# **EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO OPTIMISE UPTAKE AND USE OF HIV PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PrEP): CROWDSOURCING OPEN CALLS IN AUSTRALIA, THE PHILIPPINES, THAILAND AND CHINA**

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## **Background:**

Crowdsourcing facilitates collaboration between community members and experts from diverse fields in solving problems and sharing solutions. Scaling up HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has been slow in Asia. Tailored strategies to increase PrEP uptake are needed.

## **Methods:**

Crowdsourcing open calls were conducted between 2021 and 2023 in Australia, the Philippines, Thailand, and China to solicit strategies to increase PrEP uptake among key and general populations. Based on The World Health Organization crowdsourcing in health research practical guide, our open calls entailed: problem identification; committee formation with local groups; community engagement for idea submission; evaluation of submissions; awarding incentives to finalists; and solution dissemination via web and social media.

## **Results:**

Our crowdsourcing meaningfully engaged communities to address persistent challenges (e.g., stigma and discrimination) encountered by socially marginalised populations, such as trans and gender-diverse people, and men who have sex with men. The Australia, Philippines, Thailand and China teams received 9, 22, 9, and 19 eligible submissions, respectively. Three themes shared by the finalist ideas from all countries included: 1) enhancing service delivery; 2) optimising promotional campaigns; and 3) generating person-centered promotional materials. The final ideas from the Australian, Filipino, Thai, and Chinese teams were an anonymous online PrEP service, a printed ready-to-wear garment to create awareness about PrEP, PrEP kiosk, and posters on PrEP effectiveness, respectively.

**Conclusions:**

Crowdsourcing is useful for generating solutions across countries that account for cultural differences, health systems, and HIV epidemics. Further implementation research is needed to assess the effectiveness of the final solutions. This empirical evidence can accelerate the adoption of these co-designed innovations. The Australia team will conduct a trial to utilise interventions from their crowdsourcing open call (ACTRN12623001361695).

**Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

No author reported interest statement.