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# HIVFactSheet: A mobile application designed and implemented by youth peer mentors to facilitate HIV and reproductive health care among adolescents and young adults

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**Introduction:** Adolescents and young adults in sub-Saharan Africa face complex challenges in accessing HIV testing, HIV care, and sexual and reproductive health services. We describe and characterize the uptake of a unique mHealth intervention that was designed, led, and implemented by youth peer mentors (YPM) in the Academic Model Providing Access to Healthcare (AMPATH) in western Kenya.

**Methods:** A mobile application was developed to address the unmet needs that YPM identified in youth education around HIV testing, HIV care, and sexual and reproductive health. The application was available on Android devices for free download on the Google Play store and was advertised at AMPATH clinics with YPM and on social media including Facebook and Twitter. The application incorporates comprehensive educational materials and information about health facilities and services in Kenya. Materials were gathered from local and international government and non-government organizations and reviewed and approved by a clinical and social technical advisory committee at AMPATH. The app has several additional functions; using the app, users can set up reminders for clinic appointments and may call, text, or email a YPM for assistance accessing care or to ask care-related questions. YPM have access to clinical feedback through another WhatsApp group with the advisory committee that included clinicians, nurses, counselors, and other YPM to provide feedback on clinical questions.

**Results:** Since launching the application in December 2017, as of April 2019 the application was downloaded 5,800 times with 4,953 active users. Downloads primarily originated in Kenya (68%) and other countries of East Africa (12%), but also globally. Through the app, YPM fielded 101 calls, 197 text messages, and 41 emails. Contact with YPM through the app included questions about a broad range of topics on HIV testing, prevention, and care; reproductive and sexual health; substance abuse and addiction; and navigating health care. YPM contacted through the app provided individualized counseling and referred 183 users (97 males and 86 females) to health services.

**Conclusions:** Adolescents and young adults should be empowered to lead interventions to address the challenges that they face in navigating care. A unique mobile application intervention spearheaded by YPM providing access to comprehensive health education and individualized counseling and referral has great potential to facilitate HIV and sexual and reproductive health care for young people.