

# Reducing the Burden of HIV in the Philippines



\* The person in this photograph is not a real patient.

## The Challenge

- The Philippines is one of seven countries in the world where HIV infection rates are increasing <sup>1</sup>.
- It had the highest proportional increase of infections among 15-24 year olds from 2005-2015, and the number of people living with HIV is anticipated to increase substantially by 2022. <sup>2</sup>
- The quality of HIV care in the country can vary from site to site, with time from diagnosis to treatment and level of stigma differing greatly between regions.
- The emerging burden of HIV in the country is also acknowledged by the relevant authorities and they are also looking at ways to address those challenges.

## Our Solution

In November 2016, Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) as part of a Connect for Life™ initiative collaborated for formative research with the Sustained Health Initiatives of the Philippines (SHIP), a non-governmental organization (NGO) running a specialist HIV care center at the Philippines General Hospital in Manila. SHIP provides care services to approximately 700 people living with HIV, which includes a large population of men having sex with men and trans-genders with a history of substance abuse. According to Dr. Kate Leyritana, Clinical Director of SHIP, "The latest figures are extremely worrisome and this collaboration has come at a crucial time for communities in the Philippines. SHIP is proud to be able to provide its patients with the Connect for Life™ program, encouraging people to adhere to their HIV medication and empowering them to choose healthy behaviors."

## The Goal

Research and understand the drivers that influence patient behaviour and affect adherence as well as understand existing care pathways and create efficiencies within the system.

# Our Approach

The diverse geography of the Philippines often limits access to healthcare services. Better interconnectivity between health providers could reduce variations in quality of care across the islands.

Connect for Life™ offers treating physicians a clinical information system to further engage with their patients and offers patients the means to stay connected across remote locations.

Before Connect for Life™, it would often be difficult for healthcare workers to track patients who have missed follow-up visits or their pharmacy refill. Now with Connect for Life™, the clinic is able to influence patient adherence and adopt a standardized consultative approach across their patient cohort.

To support the healthcare workers and facilitate follow-up with patients, the Connect for Life™ system generates specific patient-level and program-level reports. This enables closer monitoring of the health behavior of the patient and captures their ongoing interaction with the service.

## Call Status Report

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	Date generation report	CfL ID	Call Date (DD/MM/YYYY)	Call Direction	Call Start Time (HH:MM:SS)	Call End Time (HH:MM:SS)	Duration of Call (seconds)	Status of Call (as provided by IVR Platform)	Status Reason of Call	Message Played	Phone Number	PIN Locked
2	16-01-2017	93	16-01-17	OUTBOUND	1:30:01	1:31:03	0:00:00	COMPLETED	NETWORK	CFL-SHIP-ukulele	#####	NO
3	16-01-2017	69	15-01-17	OUTBOUND	17:42:38	17:43:41	63	COMPLETED	TIMEOUT	CFL-SHIP-ukulele	#####	NO
4	16-01-2017	88	14-01-17	INBOUND	22:00:04	22:01:11	67	COMPLETED	APPLICATION	CFL-SHIP-ukulele	#####	NO
5												
6												

## Messages Listened Report – (Report at a Call Level)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Date Report Generated	CfL ID	Voice Filename	Played At	Healthtip Useful	Health Tip
2	16-01-17	43	Medical Adherence	10/1/2017 20:00	YES	To help you remember if you have taken your dose for the day
3	16-01-17	49	Medical ART	24/10/2016 22:21:23	YES	Antiretroviral therapy, or ART, is a combination of medications
4	16-01-17	42	Behavior Mental Health	25/10/2016 09:01:57	YES	Q: What do I do when I find out I am HIV Positive?
5						
6						

## Aggregate Clinic Status – (Report at Clinic Level)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	Date generation report	Clinic Name	# of Patients in Total	# of Patients with Status = Active	# of Patients with Status = Consent	# of Patients with Status = Deactivated	# of Patients with Status = Suspended	# of Patients with Status = No Consent	# of Patients with Status = Registered with No Consent	# of Patients with PIN = Active	# of Patients with PIN = Locked	# of Patients with PIN = RESET
2	16-01-2017	SHIP Clinic Shaw	66	66	0	0	0	0	0	52	5	9
3												

# Message Examples

Behaviour change messages were developed to influence knowledge in five different health domains.

*Medical messages (HIV adherence)*  
*Drug Use and harm reduction*  
*Fitness, nutrition and lifestyle*  
*Mental health and coping*  
*Sexual risk reduction*

## Health Tips

"Everyone can catch HIV/AIDS during unprotected sex with an infected person. AIDS does not discriminate-every one of us is at risk. ALWAYS use condoms to protect yourself."

"HIV positive people are 5-10 times more likely to get TB as HIV weakens the immune system. Go to a clinic for a TB test if you've been losing weight, had chills, fever, night sweats or coughing for more than 2 weeks or if you have aches in the joints, kidneys, stomach or spine because TB can develop outside the lungs. An HIV+ person who gets TB and doesn't treat it risks dying from complications."

"Depression, stress, and anxiety can be difficult to overcome and are very common for people living with HIV. Exercise is one of the best things you can do to help yourself feel better mentally – it's not just about physical fitness. Exercise is beneficial because we produce hormones that help calm us down when we exercise. Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day."

# The Impact

Healthcare professionals can monitor their patients in real-time using the Connect for Life™ dashboard, which provides an overview on patient's health status such as their medication adherence along with other relevant vital signs such as viral load, CD4 counts etc.

To develop this, Janssen in collaboration with SHIP adopted a formative research approach and held workshops to understand patient needs and challenges and also gather system requirements that would enable a closer engagement between the patient and the treating physicians.

Focus groups held with the patients helped generate insights into potential challenges and knowledge gaps that patients faced. As an outcome of this exercise, a comprehensive approach was developed with both the technology and the behaviour change messages that would support both the patients and the physicians.

The aim for Connect for Life™ Philippines is to understand and improve existing care pathway and contribute towards developing an innovative model of care delivery locally.

"Through Connect for Life™ the patient is placed at the heart of the decision-making process which can build trust and understanding between the patient and their doctor, resulting in better health and well-being for people living with HIV" said Jeffrey Go, Managing Director, Johnson & Johnson Philippines, Inc.

## References

1. UNICEF. Philippines: HIV and AIDS. Available at: <http://www.unicef.org/philippines/hivaids.html#.VxEP-PkrKaE> Last accessed April 2016.
2. Philippines Department of Health, Epidemiology Bureau. HIV/AIDS and ART Registry of the Philippines: newly diagnosed AIDS cases in the Philippines, September 2015. Available at: [http://www.doh.gov.ph/sites/default/files/statistics/EB\\_HIV\\_Sept-AIDSreg2015.pdf](http://www.doh.gov.ph/sites/default/files/statistics/EB_HIV_Sept-AIDSreg2015.pdf) Last accessed April 2016.
3. Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting. Philippines: HIV cases could reach 133,000 by 2022. Available at: <http://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/dept-health-hiv-cases-could-reach-133000-2022> Last accessed April 2016.