

PRESS RELEASE

VillageReach Wins DREAMS Innovation Challenge

Digital health services to expand through new youth-focused HIV initiative in Africa

SEATTLE, Washington October 14, 2016 – VillageReach, a Seattle-based non-profit that develops, tests, implements, and scales global health innovations, announced that it will receive a \$1.3 million grant through the DREAMS Innovation Challenge which aims to significantly reduce new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women in the highest-burden areas of 10 sub-Saharan African countries. The Challenge is a partnership involving the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); Janssen Pharmaceutical NV (Janssen), one of the Janssen pharmaceutical companies of Johnson & Johnson; and the ViiV Healthcare with a combined \$85 million investment in more than 50 DREAMS innovations winners globally.

VillageReach’s winning proposal, *CCPF for Adolescents*, is a two-year program that will expand Airtel Chipatala Cha Pa Foni (CCPF), or “Health Center by Phone,” an existing mobile-based health hotline and message service in Malawi. VillageReach will partner with Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and the Hawaiian Islands (PPGNHI) to reach adolescent girls and young women by targeting Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) behaviors, care-seeking, and social norms in order to reduce HIV incidence and increase secondary school retention – a key contributing factor of new HIV infections.

“This extension of CCPF is a natural progression of a service that has already been embraced by the community and has been proven effective in increasing healthy behaviors,” says Carla Blauvelt, VillageReach Malawi Country Director. “Thanks to partners like PEPFAR, other donors and the Malawi Ministry of Health, CCPF continues to expand in scope and scale. The integration of youth friendly and adolescent health information into CCPF will benefit all callers, expanding the impact of the service beyond the DREAMS project, continuing to build on a successful and sustainable model for digital health programs,” adds Blauvelt.

The grant will specifically support the implementation of a package of interventions designed to increase young people’s access to information and services that help them make healthy decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. *CCPF for Adolescents* will offer a private, confidential option for youth seeking SRH information while also helping facilitate their access to facility-based services when needed. CCPF hotline workers will be trained in adolescent development and health, youth-friendly customer care, and adolescent-focused health information, such as menstrual management, contraceptive options and partner communication.

CCPF for Adolescents will also strengthen the referral system to youth-friendly services at the facility level. Utilizing the successful Pharmacy Assistant Training Program, pharmacy assistants trained through this program will provide mentorship to neighboring health facilities to build capacity for youth-friendly services. Program data will be used to further improve youth-friendly services at the facility level, increase referrals from the hotline and increase demand for CCPF services.

In addition, *CCPF for Adolescents* will benefit from PPGNHI’s years of experience educating and empowering youth on issues of SRH. VillageReach and PPGNHI will train peer mobilizers to increase demand for the CCPF hotline in schools and the community. This multi-tier approach leverages technology, peer outreach, and health facilities to cultivate a health system that supports healthy SRH behaviors amongst youth.

“We are thrilled to partner with VillageReach to empower girls, keep them in school and prevent HIV infections,” said Diane Bushley, manager of Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and the Hawaiian Islands’ Global Programs. “As the leading women’s healthcare provider and advocate, Planned Parenthood has extensive experience in creating safe and supportive environments for young people. Our programs help build confidence so today’s youth can make empowered choices. It is our goal to provide our expertise around sensitive sexual and reproductive health topics—including family planning and HIV prevention, as well as provide training on youth-friendly CCPF services and training in health centers in an inclusive and supportive way that meets the needs of all youth.”

Operating since 2011, CCPF was first developed in partnership with Concern Worldwide and VillageReach as a resource for maternal and child health information. Over the last five years, this service has expanded to serve all demographics on a growing range of health topics. Today, CCPF reaches a population of over 1.3 million people in 8 districts. *CCPF for Adolescents* further strengthens this service as a core resource for health education throughout the country, while using the proven CCPF methodology to change behaviors that lead to HIV transmission amongst youth.

About VillageReach

VillageReach is a non-profit global health innovator that develops, tests, implements and scales new solutions to critical health system challenges in low-resource environments, with an emphasis on strengthening the “last mile” of healthcare delivery. VillageReach combines expertise across public health, technology, and business to bring life-saving innovation – new systems, programs and technologies – to scale and sustainability in the world’s most underserved communities. <http://www.villagereach.org/>

About Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and the Hawaiian Islands (PPGNHI)

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and the Hawaiian Islands (PPGNHI) is the region's leading sexual and reproductive health care provider and advocate. We believe that sexual and reproductive rights are basic human rights, and that everyone has the right to choose when or whether to have a child. The organization operates 28 health centers in Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, and Western Washington and provides medical services and sexuality education for thousands of women, men, and teenagers each year. We bring the same approach to our Global Programs, and since 2001, have worked in partnership with non-governmental organizations in six countries to build their capacity to deliver comprehensive, high-quality health services. Planned Parenthood is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and relies heavily on charitable donations to ensure our patients' ability to determine their own destinies and receive the health care they need. www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-great-northwest-hawaiian-islands

About The DREAMS Innovation Challenge

On July 18th, the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); Janssen Pharmaceutica NV (Janssen), one of the Janssen pharmaceutical companies of Johnson & Johnson; and the ViiV Healthcare announced a combined \$85 million investment to support 56 DREAMS Innovation Challenge winners in 10 sub-Saharan African countries. The DREAMS Innovation Challenge will accelerate progress toward the DREAMS target of achieving a 40 percent reduction in new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women in the highest-burden areas of 10 sub-Saharan African countries by the end of 2017. The \$385 million DREAMS public-private partnership, led by PEPFAR and with the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Girl Effect, Johnson & Johnson, Gilead Sciences, and ViiV Healthcare, is supporting adolescent girls and young women to become Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe. www.dreamschallenge.org

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