

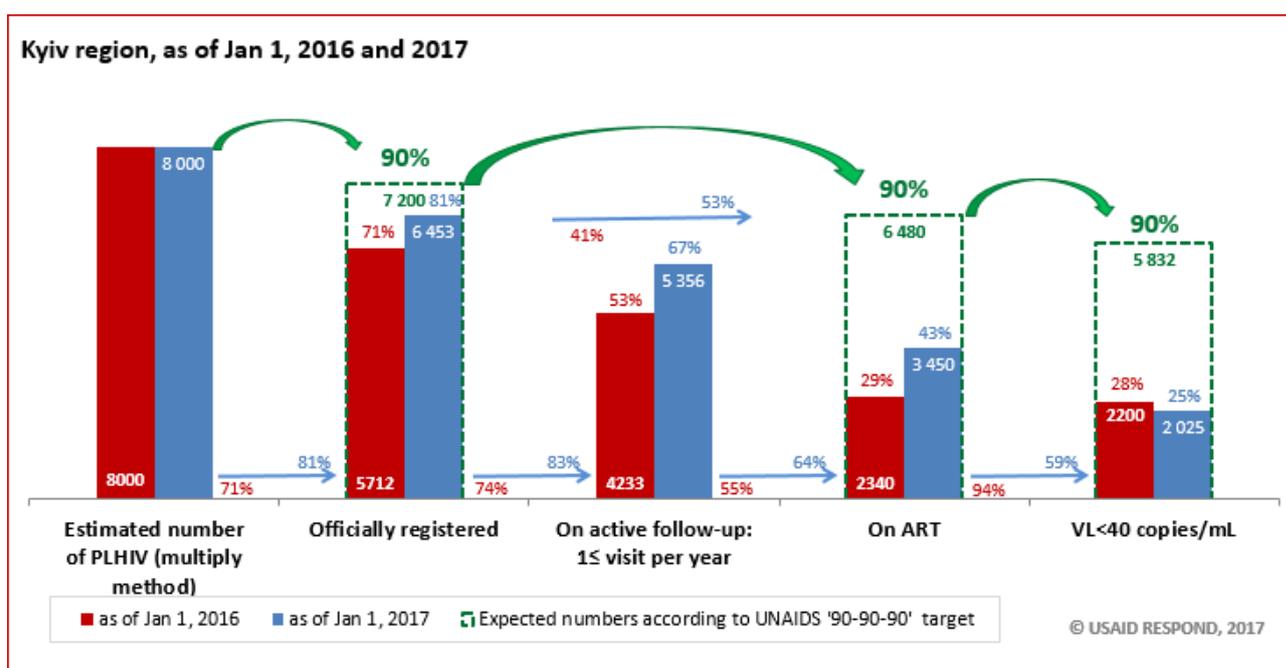
Successful QI Change, Kyiv region, March 2017

Change: **Returning lost to follow up patients to care using text messages, phone calls or letters**

Gap: **Linkage to care and retention gaps**

Problem Statement & Improvement Objectives

In Kyiv region, as of January 1, 2016, the gap between the number of PLHIV registered with AIDS service and the number of PLHIV actively followed-up was over 1,400 people, or 25%. The objective of the regional QI team is to reach the target of 94% of registered PLHIV being on active follow-up by March 2017.



System issues and changes tested

One of the main reasons for the low retention in care identified by the regional QI team was patients forgetting about their appointments at ART sites. This happens due to lack of the follow-up mechanism between ART sites and patients, and competing priorities in patients' lives. To address this challenge, the QI team developed a set of changes aimed at patients who are registered but do not visit the regional AIDS center or ART site. Patients lost to follow-up care as far back as 2004 were reached by nurses and/or social workers by phone. Two sites (Brovary and Bila Tserkva) used home visiting by a social worker and a nurse as an additional method for reaching out to patients. Patients not found at home received letters with an invitation to make a visit to the local hospital for a check-up. No reference to HIV was made should an unintended reader receive such a letter.

Scale of the improvement effort

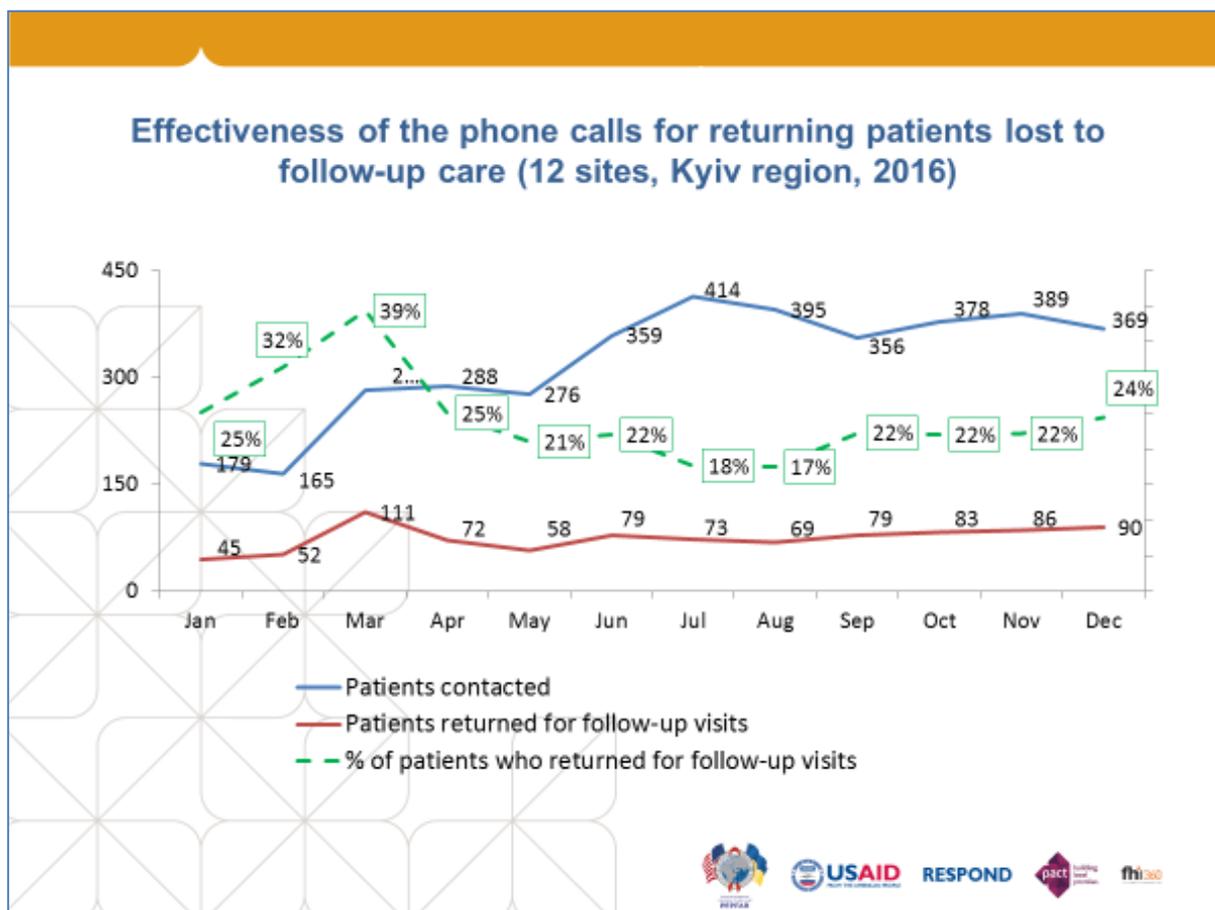
Twelve ART sites in Kyiv region (Bila Tserkva, Boryspil, Brovary, Irpin', Boyarka, Fastiv, Vyshgorod, Myronivka, Obuhiv, Rzhyschiv, Vasylykiv, and Kyiv regional AIDS center) were involved in the implementation of changes. All the sites used phone calls to reach

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the patients, and two sites (Brovary and Bila Tsrekva) also used home visits and letters as follow-up actions.

Improvement measures, results and interpretation

The linkage to care gap was tracked quarterly through run charts on the number of phone calls made, and number of patients coming for the follow-up appointments as a result. The graph below demonstrates the effectiveness of phone calls in 2016: between 17-39% of patients returned into follow-up care as a result of active outreach by ART sites.



Learning and Next Steps

The changes implemented in the Kyiv region contributed to closing the gap between the number of PLHIV registered and retained in care from 26% in 2015 to 17% in 2016 by bringing them back for at least annual follow-up visits. As a result, 83% of officially registered PLHIV have made at least one follow up visit in the past year.

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