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NEWSLETTER

ISSUE #05: MAY 2025

Connecting Communities, Transforming Lives



HEALTH EXPO- PG 1

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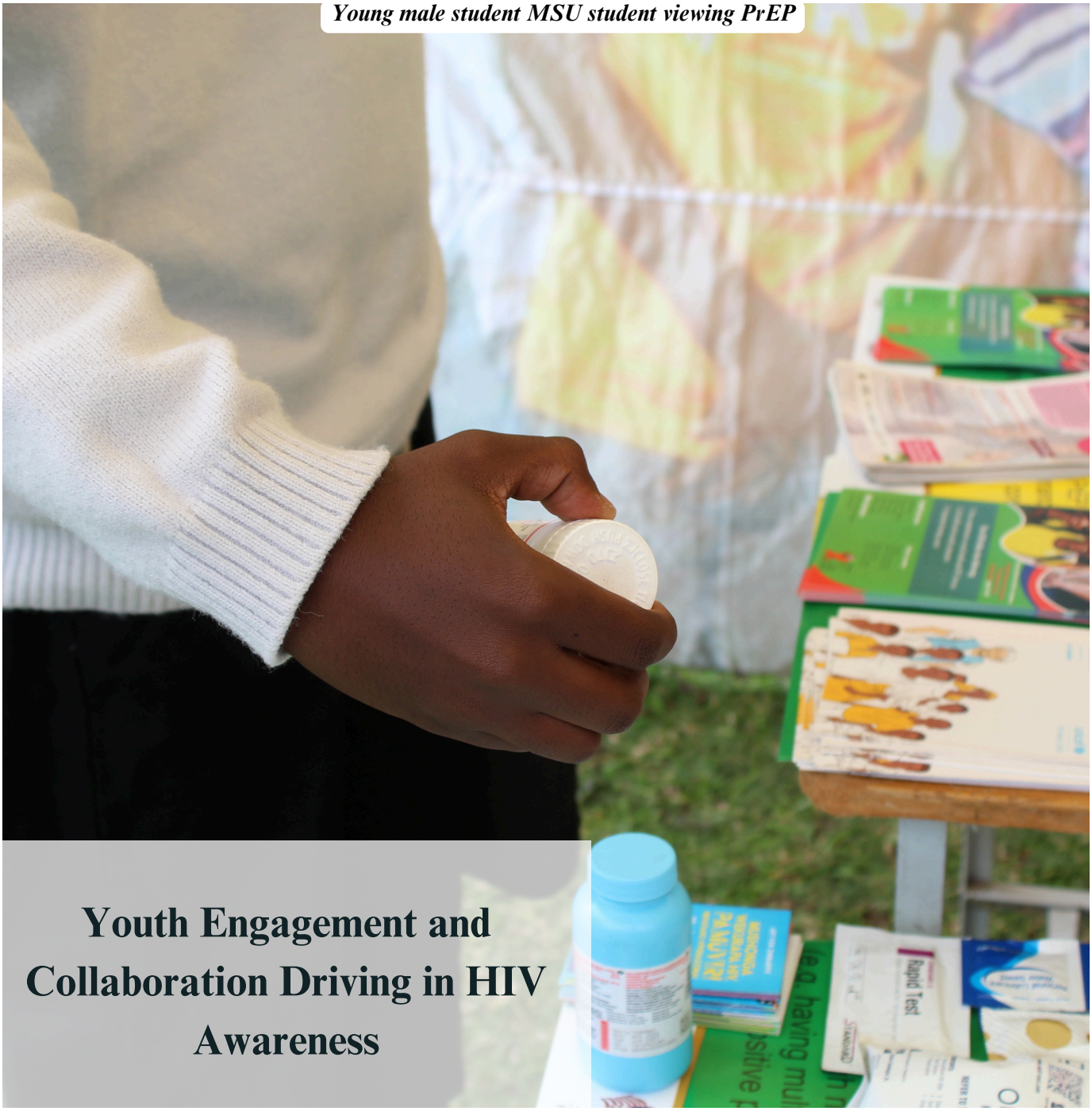


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Young male student MSU student viewing PrEP

Youth Engagement and Collaboration Driving in HIV Awareness

Earlier this May, PZ proudly participated in the Health Expo hosted at Midlands State University's (MSU) Zvishavane Campus,- at an energetic gathering that showcased the power of collaboration in promoting health and wellness among young people in tertiary institutions.

This event, which was more than just a collaborative platform, was a space where students, health professionals, university staff, and community organizations came together to advance shared goals around HIV prevention, treatment, and care. Through this collective engagement, critical conversations were sparked on STI screening mental health, menstrual health, and the importance of youth-friendly services.

Our team, Cleopatra Makura and Nyasha Musekwa, were excited to collaborate with the MSU campus clinic, offering students direct access to HIV testing and referrals for PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis).

The enthusiastic response from students, asking questions, engaging in dialogue, and seeking services, reflected not only a rising awareness but also a strong sense of shared responsibility for health outcomes among young people.

"*A major highlight was the level of student engagement around PrEP. Their curiosity and commitment to learning more about HIV prevention show that youth are ready to lead the way in protecting their health*", Cleopatra Makuru, from PZ, noted:

The PZ team was also fortunate to have Nyasha Musekwa, our Combination HIV Prevention project nurse, on-site to offer youth-friendly, professional support. His presence, along with the active involvement of MSU clinic staff, helped create a seamless link between outreach and service delivery.



Health Expo in Pictures

Cleopatra Makura posing for a photo during the Health Expo

According to Sister Mudani, the Sister-In-Charge at the campus clinic, who expressed the university's appreciation:

"We appreciate the PZ team's participation in this collaborative initiative. Events like this not only educate, but also strengthen the partnerships needed to support student health. Together, we are building a future where every young person is informed, empowered, and supported."

We extend our sincere thanks to MSU for fostering such collaborative spaces and to every student who participated. Engagement doesn't end with the event, it continues through every question asked, every service accessed, and every partnership built. Together, we are shaping healthier futures for all.

Closing the Dental Health Gap: Boost for Oral Health in Lupane

Access to dental care remains a significant challenge in many rural communities. In Lupane district, limited resources, lack of equipment, and a shortage of trained dental professionals have long left residents with few options for treatment, often at great financial and physical cost.

For one patient, chronic tooth pain had made daily life difficult. "*I struggled to sleep and eat for months due to tooth pain*," they shared.

Through the support of the PZ Wild4Life Health Program, four dental outreach visits were conducted across the district. These outreaches were supplied with essential dental consumables, including lignocaine cartridges, short and long dental needles, gauze, and alvocure paste.



Villlager receiving dental care at one of the clinics in Lupane

I am thankful to the Wild4Life program for bringing dental care services to our local clinic. The extraction fees and transport costs to St. Luke's Hospital were beyond my reach. This program has been a life saver.

As a result, 200 extractions were successfully carried out for 118 clients. The impact of these interventions goes beyond the numbers. For many, it meant access to care that would otherwise remain out of reach. It reflects a broader commitment to strengthening healthcare delivery in underserved areas and addressing the often-overlooked needs that directly affect quality of life.

By bringing second-level dental services closer to communities, the program continues to demonstrate that equitable healthcare is not a distant ideal, but a practical goal within reach.

Breaking Stigmas and Championing Choice

May 28, 2025 was Menstrual Hygiene day and annual awareness day to highlight the importance of good menstrual hygiene management at a gloabl level. On this day in Mazowe Menstrual Hygiene Day 2025, Charlotte Makosheri of PZ Shaz Hub in Mazowe delivered a powerful message that called for greater awareness and collective responsibility around menstrual health:

"*Periods aren't just a women's issue, they're a health issue, and a dignity issue. When people can't manage their periods safely and with confidence, it affects their education, their work, and their wellbeing. That's why menstrual health matters for everyone. Whether you menstruate or not, we all have a role to play in creating a world where periods are understood, supported, and never stigmatized. Because at the end of the day, periods are everybody's business.*"

This statement reflects a truth that is too often overlooked: menstruation is a normal, biological process, yet it remains surrounded by silence, discomfort, and harmful misconceptions. For many, the inability to manage their periods effectively results in missed opportunities, emotional distress, and reduced participation in school or work.

Menstrual health is not simply about access to pads or clean toilets. It is about whether people feel safe, informed, and supported. Too often, individuals who menstruate face unnecessary shame or are forced to hide their experiences due to outdated beliefs or lack of understanding in their communities.

This silence has consequences. Without accurate information, myths about menstruation persist. Without open conversation, those who struggle with their periods are left to suffer quietly. And without a shared sense of responsibility, the issue is treated as someone else's problem, when in truth, it affects us all.



Charlotte Makosheri

Charlotte Makosheri's message invites everyone to reconsider their role. Teachers can foster supportive classrooms. Parents can normalize the topic at home. Employers can ensure that workplaces accommodate basic needs. Policymakers can prioritize menstrual health in education and health services. And everyone, regardless of whether they menstruate or not, can help challenge stigma by simply talking about periods with honesty and respect.

Creating a society where menstrual health is taken seriously requires more than short-term fixes. It demands that we treat this issue with the same urgency and care we apply to any other basic need. It requires us to listen, to learn, and to act. At its core, the message is simple yet transformative: **periods are everybody's business.**

> ***Whether you menstruate or not, we all share responsibility in creating a world where periods are safe, supported, and stigma-free***

Improving Access: CHIP Project Delivers Onsite HIV Testing and Counselling

In the community of Chitungwiza, the Combination HIV Prevention project is promoting health seeking behaviours among adolescents and young people by continuing to enhance access to HIV prevention, testing, and treatment services through targeted outreach activities. These efforts focus on bringing services directly to underserved and high-priority populations.

During a recent outreach event, young people from Unit L, Chitungwiza commented on how the provision of mobile health services was important for them as services were being offered in a youth-friendly environment. Many expressed appreciation for the convenience and respectful approach of the outreach teams. Such mobilisation efforts aim to address barriers such as stigma, distance from health facilities, and lack of information, factors that often prevent young people and couples from seeking HIV-related services.

At the outreach site, trained CHIP nurse, Nyasha Musekwa, provided HIV testing and counselling in a confidential and client-friendly setting. The services included pre- and post-test counselling, HIV prevention education, and linkage to treatment for those who tested positive. After receiving services, clients were supported with clear information on next steps, including referrals and follow-up support where necessary.

"We continue to prioritise reaching key and priority populations, particularly in hard-to-reach areas, with comprehensive HIV services."



CHIP Nurse, Nyasha, during a counselling session with one of the clients



CHIP Champions during the outreach

Through these community-based strategies, Pangaea Zimbabwe is contributing to national efforts to reduce new HIV infections and ensure early diagnosis and treatment", he said.

Key to the success of these initiatives are the CHIP Champions, community members trained to mobilize and educate peers. They play an active role in mobilizing clients in the area, using peer networks and local knowledge to encourage participation.

"*To see young people coming to access services and show interest in HIV prevention is motivating and shows the power of outreaches to promote healthy choices"*, Tinaye said, one of the CHIP Champions who was part of the outreach activity.



CHIP Champions during the outreach

DROP- IN CENTRES

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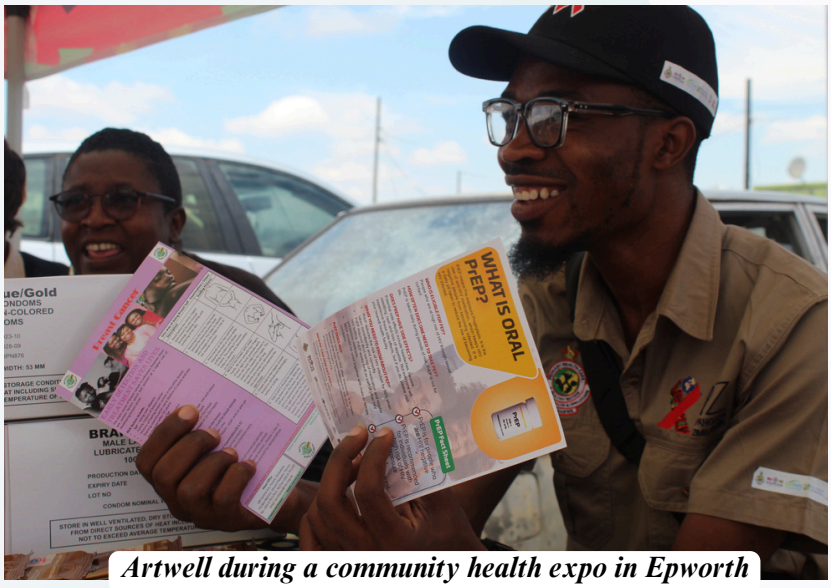
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Turning Awareness into Action for Mental Health

Mental Health Awareness Month 2025 arrived under the bold and urgent theme: “Turn Awareness into Action.” This is more than a slogan, it is a timely call for responsibility, commitment, and meaningful change.

For years, awareness campaigns have helped reduce stigma and create space for open conversations about mental health. We’ve made progress in acknowledging that mental health is just as important as physical health. But awareness alone is not enough. What matters now is what we do with that awareness.

“*As we work to support mental health, let's focus on practical strategies that promote well-being and resilience. Problem-solving therapy can be a powerful tool in this effort, helping individuals develop the skills and confidence they need to tackle life's challenges. This Mental Health Awareness month let's commit to taking action – whether that's seeking support for ourselves or others, practicing self-care, or advocating for mental health resources in our communities. Together, we can turn awareness into action and create a more supportive and compassionate world for everyone.”* Artwell Manyemba, Program Assistant for the ZimPAAC Care and Treatment program.



Artwell during a community health expo in Epworth

“*Each of us has a role to play. Whether it’s raising awareness for better services, creating safe spaces for dialogue, or simply offering a listening ear, action doesn’t always have to be grand, it just must be consistent and sincere*” Tariro Mazivanhanga from the Mazowe SHAZ! Hub, who is a friendship bench buddie after training under the CHIP Project.

This May, let us not stop at raising awareness. Let us build systems that protect mental health. Because true progress in mental health comes not only from what we say, but from what we do.

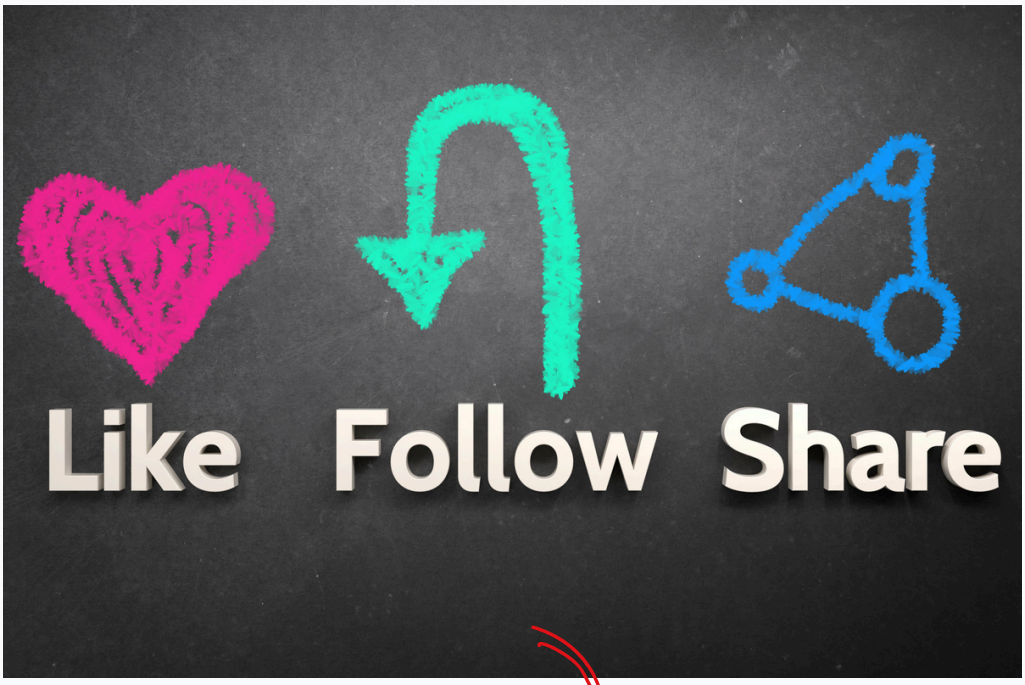


Tariro during a economic strengthening training

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We envision an environment in which all human beings live healthy, productive, and quality lives.

We strive to transform the lives of underserved populations by working to increase access to quality, responsive, evidence based, client-centered comprehensive health services through facility and community engagement and policy advocacy

Equity

Intergrity

Inclusivity

Stewardship