

# COMBINATION SOCIAL PROTECTION IMPROVES ADOLESCENT ART-ADHERENCE

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## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Can social protection programs improve adolescent ART-adherence in South Africa?

If so, do combinations of social protection programs increase adherence rates?



## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Low adolescent ART-adherence is highly associated with morbidity, mortality, and HIV transmission.
- There are many types of social protection programs, and some may be more effective than others for adolescents living with HIV.
- Low reported rates of adherence are a critical factor leading to morbidity, mortality, viral resistance and onward HIV transmission (Nachega et al., 2009).



## FINDINGS

### SELF-REPORTED ADOLESCENT ART NON-ADHERENCE IS ASSOCIATED WITH POOR CLINICAL OUTCOMES

- Past-week non-adherence was associated with increased rates of opportunistic infections, such as shingles, TB symptoms, and sores on the body and face.
- In a subsample (n = 266), past-week non-adherence was associated with increased rates of detectable viral load (>75 copies/ ml).

## KEY MESSAGES

HIV-positive adolescents are at high risk of ART non-adherence and related poor health outcomes.

Social protection provisions are associated with significantly reduced non-adherence in adolescents.

Combinations of social protection provisions are associated with greater reductions in non-adherence than single provisions alone.



## METHODOLOGY

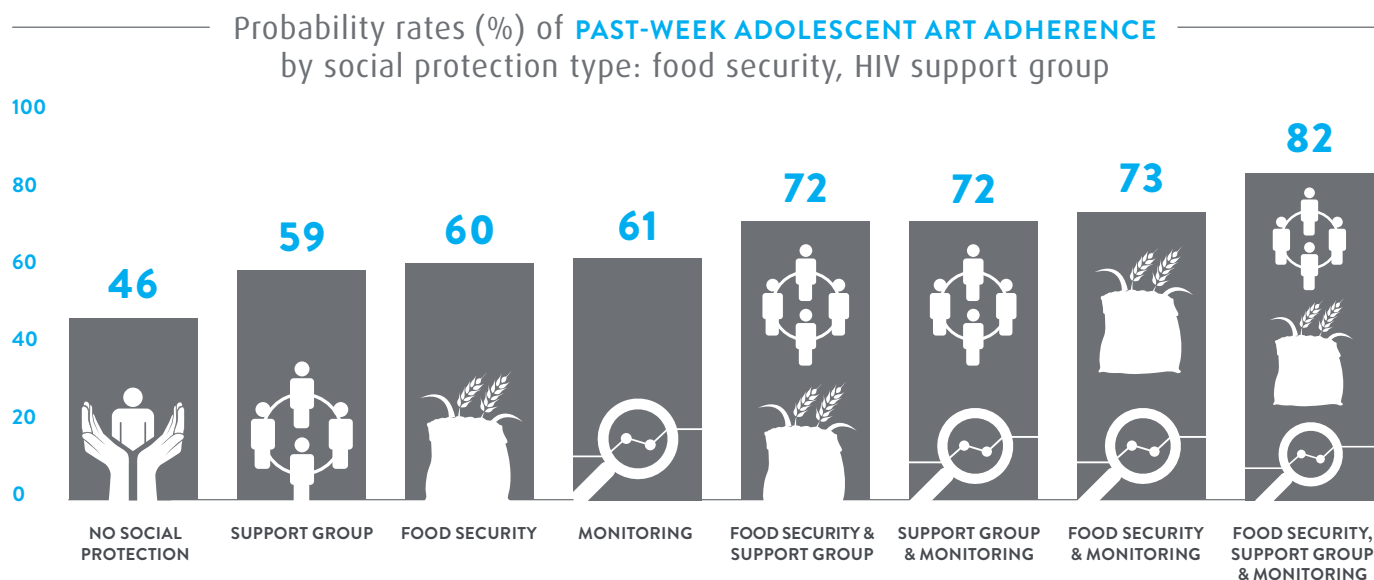
- The largest known community-traced sample of HIV-positive adolescents: 90.1% of all ART-initiated 10-19-years-olds in 53 government healthcare facilities in Eastern Cape (n=1059).
- Association of 10 social protection provisions to adherence was studied.
- Analyses controlled for socio-demographic, HIV, and health-care-related covariates.

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FINDINGS

**THREE SPECIFIC SOCIAL PROTECTION PROVISIONS WERE ASSOCIATED WITH REDUCED NON-ADHERENCE**  
 Food security, attending an HIV support group, and high parental/caregiver supervision were independently associated with reduced past-week non-adherence.

**COMBINATIONS OF SOCIAL PROTECTION SHOW ADDITIVE BENEFITS FOR REDUCING NON-ADHERENCE**



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