



# A Systematic Review of a Peer-Led HIV Self-Testing and Counselling Model for University Students in Nigerian Residence Halls: Evidence from 2014

Chinwe Okonkwo<sup>1</sup>, Ifeoma Nwachukwu<sup>1,2</sup>, Adebayo Adeyemi<sup>3,4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> American University of Nigeria (AUN)

<sup>2</sup> Department of Public Health, University of Benin

<sup>3</sup> University of Benin

<sup>4</sup> Department of Public Health, American University of Nigeria (AUN)

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**Correspondence:** [cokonkwo@outlook.com](mailto:cokonkwo@outlook.com)

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## Author notes

*Chinwe Okonkwo is affiliated with American University of Nigeria (AUN) and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.  
Ifeoma Nwachukwu is affiliated with American University of Nigeria (AUN) and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.  
Adebayo Adeyemi is affiliated with University of Benin and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.*

## Abstract

University students in Nigeria are a crucial demographic for HIV prevention, but testing rates within this group remain low. Student residence halls offer a strategic setting for intervention. Peer-led approaches to HIV self-testing and counselling have been suggested to improve uptake and mitigate barriers such as stigma and limited access to conventional health services. This systematic review aimed to synthesise and critically appraise the existing evidence on the effectiveness of a peer-led HIV self-testing and counselling model for students in the residence halls of the University of Lagos, Nigeria. A systematic search of multiple electronic databases was conducted in accordance with PRISMA guidelines. Studies were included if they evaluated the specified peer-led model in the relevant setting. Data were extracted, and the methodological quality of included studies was assessed using appropriate critical appraisal tools. The search identified a limited number of studies meeting the inclusion criteria. The available evidence suggests the model is acceptable and feasible. Synthesised data indicate the intervention was associated with a significant increase in HIV testing uptake, with one study reporting over 80% of participants in intervention halls completed self-testing. Preliminary evidence indicates that a peer-led HIV self-testing model in Nigerian university residence halls is a promising approach for increasing testing rates. However, the current evidence base is limited, highlighting a need for more rigorous and large-scale evaluation. Future research should employ robust study designs to evaluate the model's long-term effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and impact on linkage to care. Programme planners should consider contextual adaptation of the model while ensuring comprehensive training and support for peer educators. HIV self-testing, peer-led intervention, university students, residence halls, Nigeria, systematic review This review consolidates the preliminary evidence on this specific intervention model, clarifying its potential and limitations to inform future research and public health programming.

**Keywords:** *HIV self-testing, peer-led intervention, university students, sub-Saharan Africa, residence halls, Nigeria, HIV counselling*

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