

Information on PEPFAR Site Assessment

*To be read to site staff prior to **each** SIMS assessment.*

We're here today on behalf of the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, to conduct an assessment of PEPFAR-supported activities. We hope that this will increase the impact of PEPFAR programs on the HIV epidemic. Because you work for an organization or site that receives PEPFAR support, we will be asking for your input on this assessment, as you can provide valuable information and insight into program procedures and challenges. We will be asking you questions using a standardized form for data collection. We hope that this information will help us to help you provide the best care possible to your community.

Your response to all questions is voluntary. We will not be collecting or disclosing the names or other personally identifiable information of patients, beneficiaries, or staff (for example, your name or job title will not be recorded or disclosed). We will not link anything we collect or record during this visit to any individual. All information we collect, or record will be associated only with the site, organization, or implementing partner. We will be providing feedback on the findings of this visit to site and implementing partner staff after the visit.

The United States Government (USG) will securely store the assessment visit data. In-country USG staff will use the data to improve the support that PEPFAR provides to sites and to organizations that support and guide the sites. Summary data by PEPFAR country or region as well as global summaries will be available in a format that will not identify your facility, community, or PEPFAR-supported entity. Site level data from military sites will not be publicly available.

If you would like a copy of this information form, please let us know.

Are there any questions?

SIMS Assessment Team Lead:

I have read this information form aloud and given a copy to those assisting with the site monitoring visit.

SIMS Assessment Team Lead (print name): _____

SIMS Assessment Team Lead (signature): _____

Date: _____

Site ID: _____

SIMS In-Brief Talking Points

An opening session (or in-brief) with all relevant staff on-site is a critical first step for conducting a SIMS visit after arriving at the assessment point (AP).

The in-brief session is an opportunity to:

1. Introduce each assessor to site staff and explain assessors' presence to AP staff;
2. Answer questions that AP staff might have about the SIMS assessment process and/or purpose;
3. Verify (for a final time) that the tool includes the correct Core Essential Elements (CEEs);
4. Explain that feedback will be provided during the closing session;
5. Set a positive tone for the visit.

Convening the in-brief session: It is important to initiate a positive discussion with AP staff upon arrival at the site to set the tone for a collaborative assessment. Assessors should conduct the session (and the entire SIMS visit) with a supportive approach to identifying and solving problems on-site, and to recognizing excellent quality services (and/or improvements over time) where appropriate.

- Prior to beginning the in-brief, ensure that all members of the SIMS assessment team are present, including non-USG partners who are relevant to the country context and contracts/agreements (e.g., MOD partners for military assessments, MOH partners for facility assessments, etc.)
- Ensure that all relevant AP staff are present, including leadership and staff from the assessment areas (e.g., ART clinic manager, lab director, maternity lead) to avoid the need to re-explain the purpose of the SIMS visit when assessors arrive at each area.
OUs might want to develop a script for the opening session, particularly for inexperienced assessors.

Opening session key steps:

1. Welcome on-site staff and introduce the visiting team.
2. Explain the purpose of SIMS and the general methodology of the SIMS visit.
 - a. Emphasize that the SIMS assessment is designed to optimize quality of care provided at sites through a collaborative and supportive approach to identified problems.
 - b. Ask staff if they have any questions.
3. Briefly confirm the CEEs included in the tool align with the programs that are supported by PEPFAR and available on-site.
4. Administer the "Information on PEPFAR Site Assessment" form and answer any questions from staff.
5. Review the visit schedule, highlighting the times set aside for the Opening Session, Assessment, and Closing Session.
6. Review Document Pull List with staff to highlight documentation that should be available during the visit.
7. Explain that the assessment point will receive a summary of results (Dashboard) and preliminary next steps during the Closing Session of the visit;
8. Set a tentative time and place for the Closing Session, ideally choosing one that maximizes participation by site staff involved in the visit. If possible, allow at least 20 minutes; more time may be needed for larger sites in which many program areas are assessed.