

LONDON
SCHOOL of
HYGIENE
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MEDICINE



Y-Check: Evaluating the effectiveness of adolescent health check-ups

INFORMATION SHEET – ADOLESCENT 15-19Y - SCHOOLS

Staying healthy and well will help your child to do well at school and have a prosperous future. A check-up visit is an opportunity to provide advice on health and well-being and to check physical and mental health. Your adolescent's school or community has been chosen to take part in the Y-Check programme and we would like to invite your child to take part.

What is Y-Check?

There are two parts to the Y-Check programme:

- (A) Check-up visit** providing adolescents with information & advice, a physical and mental health check-up, and, where necessary, on-the-spot services and onward referral.
- (B) Y-Check research project** aims to understand whether participants will take up the services, how they feel about the service, and how to improve the check-up visit for future adolescents.

You can choose for your child to take part in both parts of the programme or only the check-up visit, or you can choose not to participate in either.

(A) CHECK-UP VISIT

What will be the benefit of the check-up visit?

Your child will receive information and advice on how to stay healthy and well. If they have a condition or need additional support to stay healthy they will be offered help. If they need follow-on assessment, treatment or care then we will let you know and you will have an opportunity to discuss this with a counsellor or nurse.

What does the check-up visit involve?

- Provision of health information and advice
- Your adolescent will answer questions about their health and social life including questions about their home environment, education, social activities, diet and exercise, mental health, alcohol, tobacco and drug use, adolescent immunisation history, and general health questions.
- Examination of mouth, eyes and ears, and tests to check for any physical impairment.
- Measurement of weight and height, mid-upper arm and waist circumference, body composition, blood pressure, and testing for anaemia (sometimes known as “low blood”) using a finger prick sample of blood.
- Schistosomiasis (Bilharzia) testing which will involve providing a sample of urine. The urine sample will be tested in a laboratory and then the sample will be discarded.
- Information on services available at Y-Check community facilities, including mental health counselling, HIV and sexual reproductive health testing, treatment and counselling.

- Provision of menstrual products (females only) and toothcare kits.
- A chance to ask a nurse or counsellor questions about their health
- If your adolescent is identified as needing any treatment or further assessment, they will receive free on-the-spot treatment or counselling and/or they will be referred to a specialist service. We will inform you of the results and may request your help to escort the adolescent to the specialist. Counselling will be available for the adolescent and family members if the adolescent tests positive for an important health condition

The check-up visit will take 30-90 minutes.

Who is doing the check-up visits?

The check-up visits will be provided by staff from the Biomedical Research and Training Institute, Harare. The programme as a whole is being run by the Biomedical Research and Training Institute in collaboration with the Chitungwiza City Health Department, the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. The programme is funded by the British government through UK Research and Innovation.

Are there any costs associated with the check-up visit?

There will be no cost for the check-up visit. There will be no costs for any further treatment or care through the public health system for a condition that is newly discovered during the check-up visit, if accessed within the four months after the visit.

Are there any risks associated with the check-up visit?

The risks of participating in this study are minimal. As for any health care, the check-up services can have side-effects that can be serious or minor. The tests and any positive results could lead to stigma and anxiety. However, the Y-Check team will provide counselling for you and your family if you test positive for any of these conditions. The needle for the anaemia and HIV blood tests could cause discomfort or a small bruise, as with any other blood test.

What should I do if there are any complications or problems after the check-up services?

You can contact the Y-Check team by calling or sending a message to this number: 0774692698. If your adolescent needs urgent care, then you should go to the local health facility and let the staff there know that your child has received the Y-Check check-up visit.

(B) Y-CHECK RESEARCH PROJECT

What will be the benefit of participating in the Y-Check research project?

- During follow-up visits, research project participants will receive additional health information, advice and services. However, adolescents will already have received information and services at the first check-up visit so there may not be any direct benefits of these follow-up visits.
- The study will help us understand the challenges adolescents face to staying healthy, and what they need and want in terms of services, education, and support.
- We will not pay your adolescent to take part in the study. However, we will provide your adolescent with a drink and snack during follow-up interviews and we will reimburse their bus fare, up to a value of US\$5, if they have had to come to the clinic or another venue for follow-up visits/discussions.

What does the Y-Check research project involve?

- Immediately after the check-up visit your child will be invited to answer a few questions to understand how the intervention was delivered, and what the adolescent liked or did not like about the intervention.
- Your child will be asked additional questions a few days before or at the time of the first check-up visit (10-15 minute questionnaire), and attend two follow-up visits of 30-90 minutes during the 12 months following the first check-up visit.
- Follow-up visits will be similar to the check-up visit and include a questionnaire, physical examination, blood and urine testing.
- We will request contact details for the adolescents so that we can send them health information and reminders about the follow-up visits.
- We will look at the school registers for your child to collect data on their attendance and performance.
- Some adolescents will have their check-up visit and/or referral visit observed by a Y-Check team member
- Some adolescents and families will be invited to participate in individual or group interviews to discuss their experience of the check-up visit and any additional services that they received.
- Some adolescents will be invited to participate in a digital health club where they will be able to access additional health information and advice through an online platform. A separate consent form will be signed by those who would like to participate in the digital health club.

Are there any costs associated with participation in the Y-Check research project?

- There will be no cost for participation in the research project.

What happens to the data that you collect?

All information obtained will be kept secret. It will be stored using a unique study number (instead of your child's name), in safe paper and computer files. No one will be able to access the information about you except members of the study team and no one will be able to identify your child from the information and samples collected. Data without any names but only a number may be made available to other researchers. Under some circumstances, the Medical Research Council of Zimbabwe and the Research Council of Zimbabwe may review research records to check for any problems with the way that the study is being carried out.

At the end of the project, data that can be anonymised fully to protect participants' identities will be archived in the LSHTM Data Compass, a curated UK digital repository of research outputs. Details of how to access the data will be published with each study publication, and access will be granted to bona fide research users and beneficiaries based on a case-by-case request and approval process.