

# MomConnect Seminar Global Digital Health Forum

Washington DC  
5 December 2017



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# Introduction & Overview



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# Partnerships

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## Founding Partner

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## Technical Partners

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PRAEKELT.ORG



## Donors

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Johnson & Johnson



# MomConnect

MomConnect uses mobile technology to improve the health of pregnant women, newborns and infants at national scale. Every pregnant woman can register to receive free, stage-based messaging till baby 1 year old. There is access to an SMS Helpdesk for questions & complaints. The responses help improve service quality



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# Why MomConnect Again?

Analyses of MomConnect to be published in BMJ Global (first half 2018)

Share some of these analyses:

- Achievements, Challenges, Innovation (Marcha Bekker)
- Architecture and Interoperability (Annie Neo)
- Helpdesk Interactiveness (Joy Kamunyori)
- Lessons Learned (Peter Benjamin)

Future Directions

# Achievements and Challenges



Photo Credit: UNICEF South Africa [www.flickr.com/photos/unicef\\_sa/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/unicef_sa/)



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# Leadership



# MomConnect Achievements



**95%**

Percentage of clinics registering mothers in SEP South Africa



**1.7m**

Mothers registered as of November 2017



**30%**

Subscribers completing service ratings



**300,000**

Messages received & processed by the helpdesk in 11 languages

# MomConnect Achievements



**63%**

Percentage of  
all pregnant  
women in  
public sector  
have signed up



**95%**

Mothers reporting to  
“like” MomConnect and  
that they were willing to  
refer a friend

# Technology Challenges



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# Innovation



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# Architecture & Interoperability



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# Principles and Considerations

- **Scale and scale-up**
  - Open-source
  - Standards based
- **Equity (lowest common denominators)**
  - Connectivity
  - Mobile handsets
- **Limitations**
  - Cost
  - Literacy



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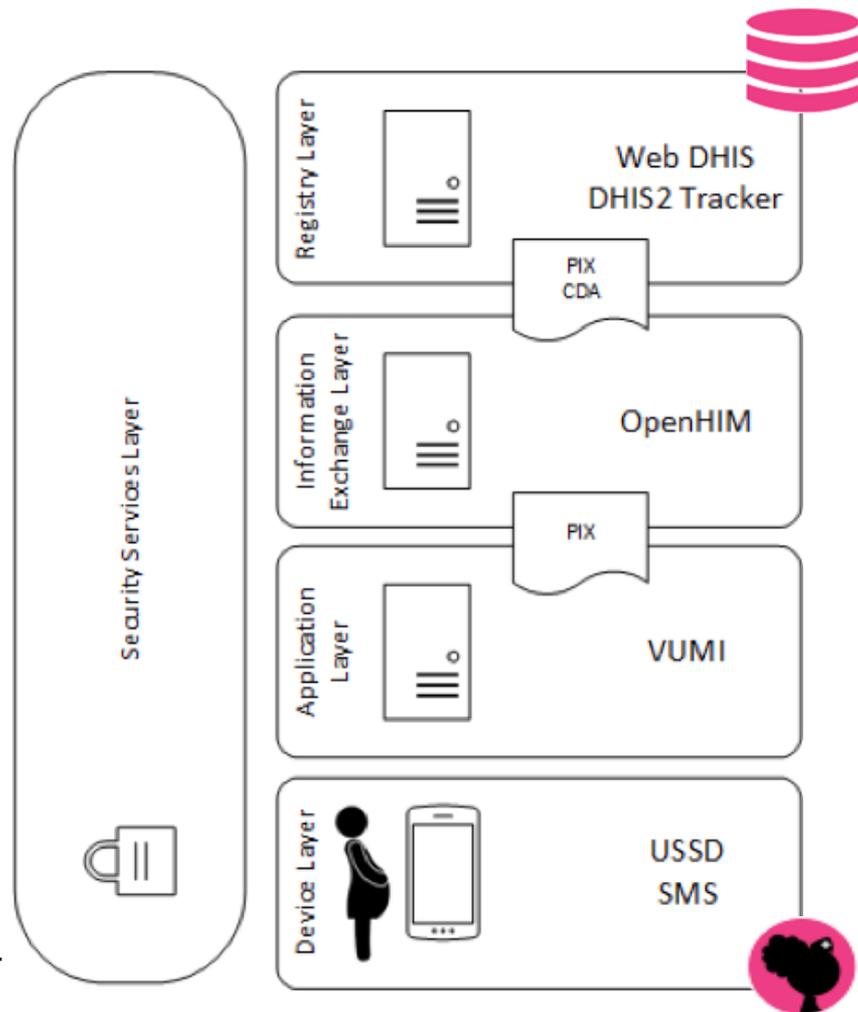
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# Set-up and Implementation Costs

<b>Set-up (Once-off)</b>	<b>Implementation (Ongoing)</b>
Mobile phone interface set-up	Mobile phone interface maintenance
Scheduling database set-up	Scheduling database maintenance
Interoperability layer built	Interoperability layer maintenance
DHIS2 instance set-up	DHIS 2 instance maintenance
HelpDesk set-up	HelpDesk staffing & maintenance
USSD integration / set-up with MNOs / Aggregators	USSD registrations of users
SMS integration / set-up with MNOs / Aggregators	SMS (text messages) sent to users
Service awareness campaign (for launch)	Service awareness campaigns (ongoing)
Training of health care workers	Training of health care workers

# Helpdesk Interactiveness



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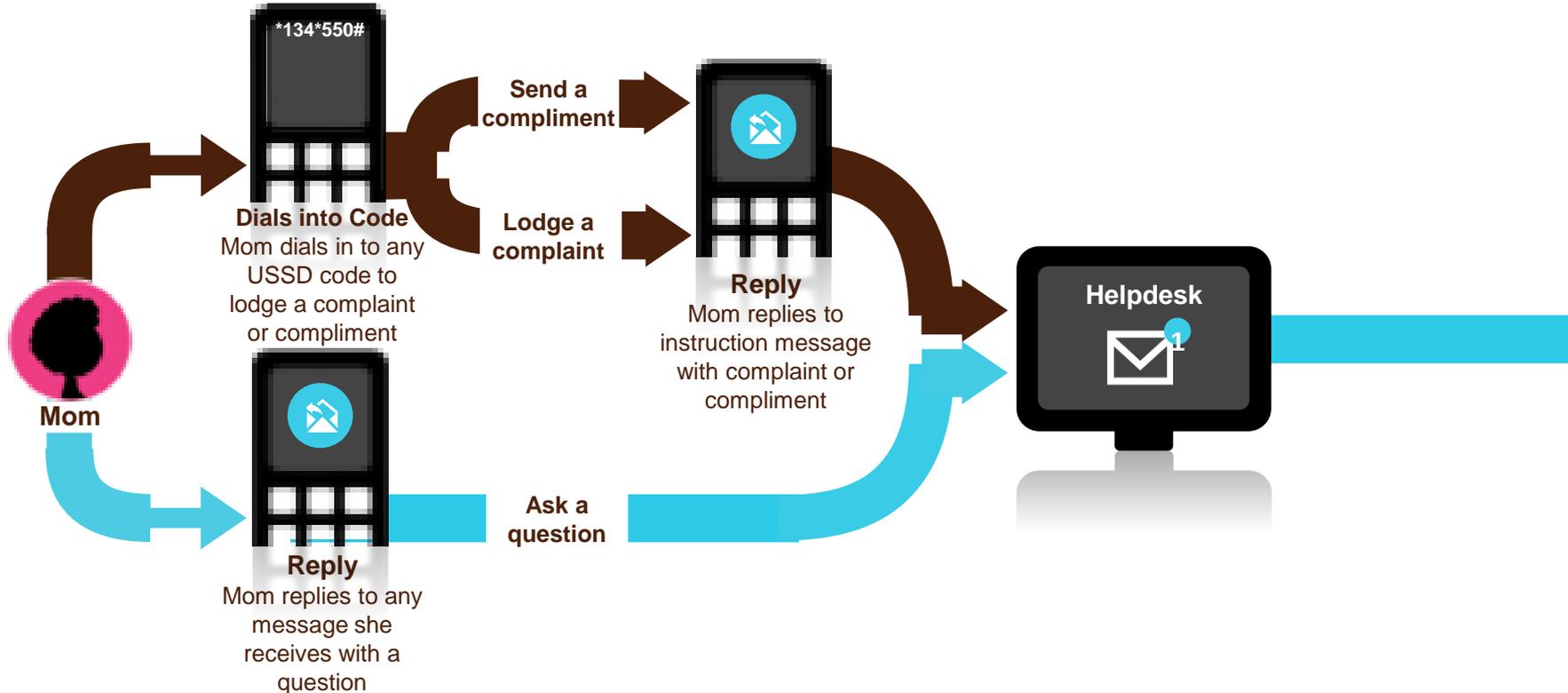
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# What is the Helpdesk?

Provides mothers with a two-way platform to ask MCH-related questions and provide feedback (compliments and complaints) on ANC services received

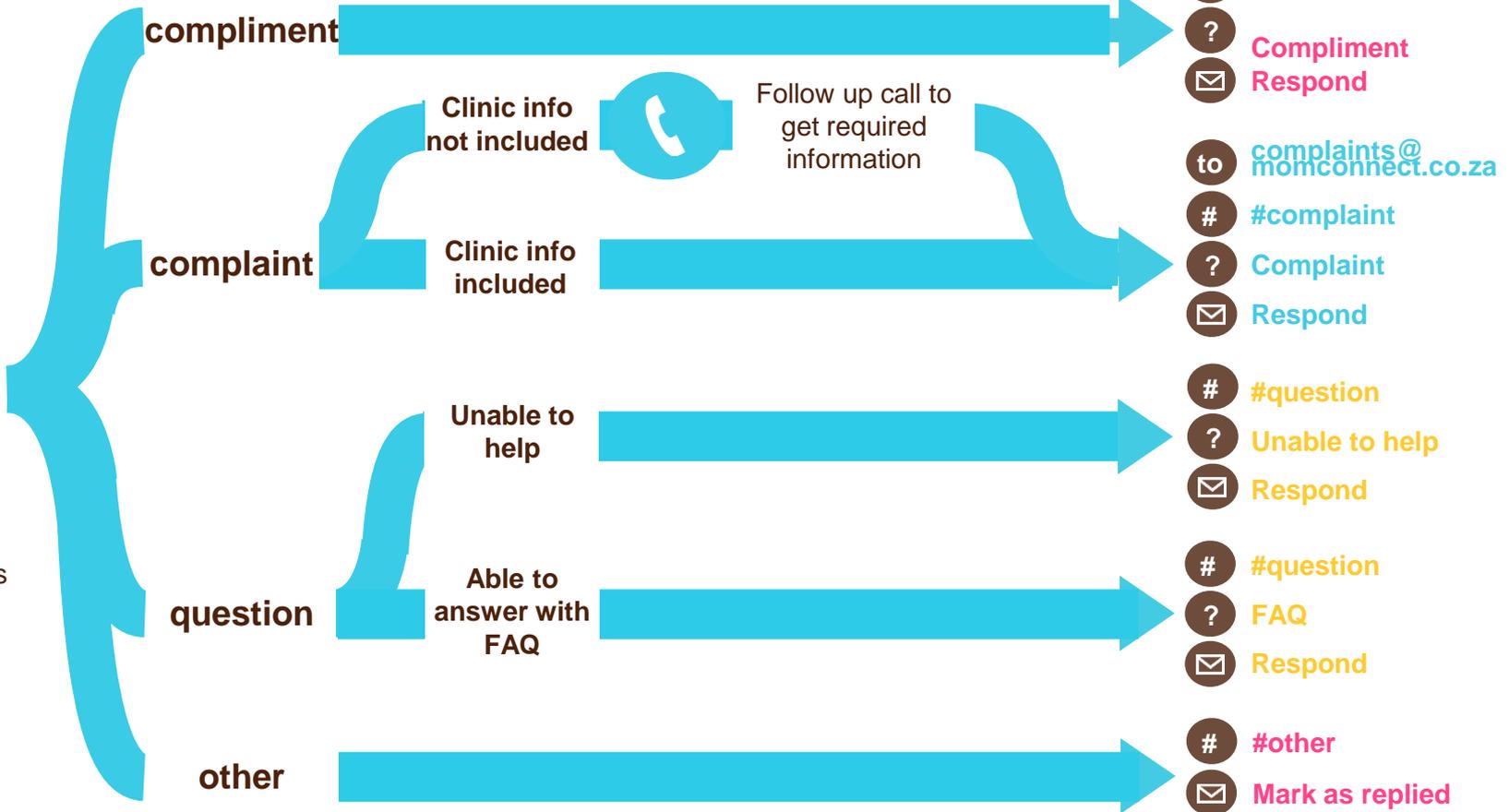
## Helpdesk Process



# Helpdesk Process



**NDOH Staff**  
Views ticket & categorises it as question, complaint or compliment



# Help Desk in Numbers (Aug '14 - March '17)



**241,715**

Unique  
messages  
sent



**95,288**

Unique users



**48%**

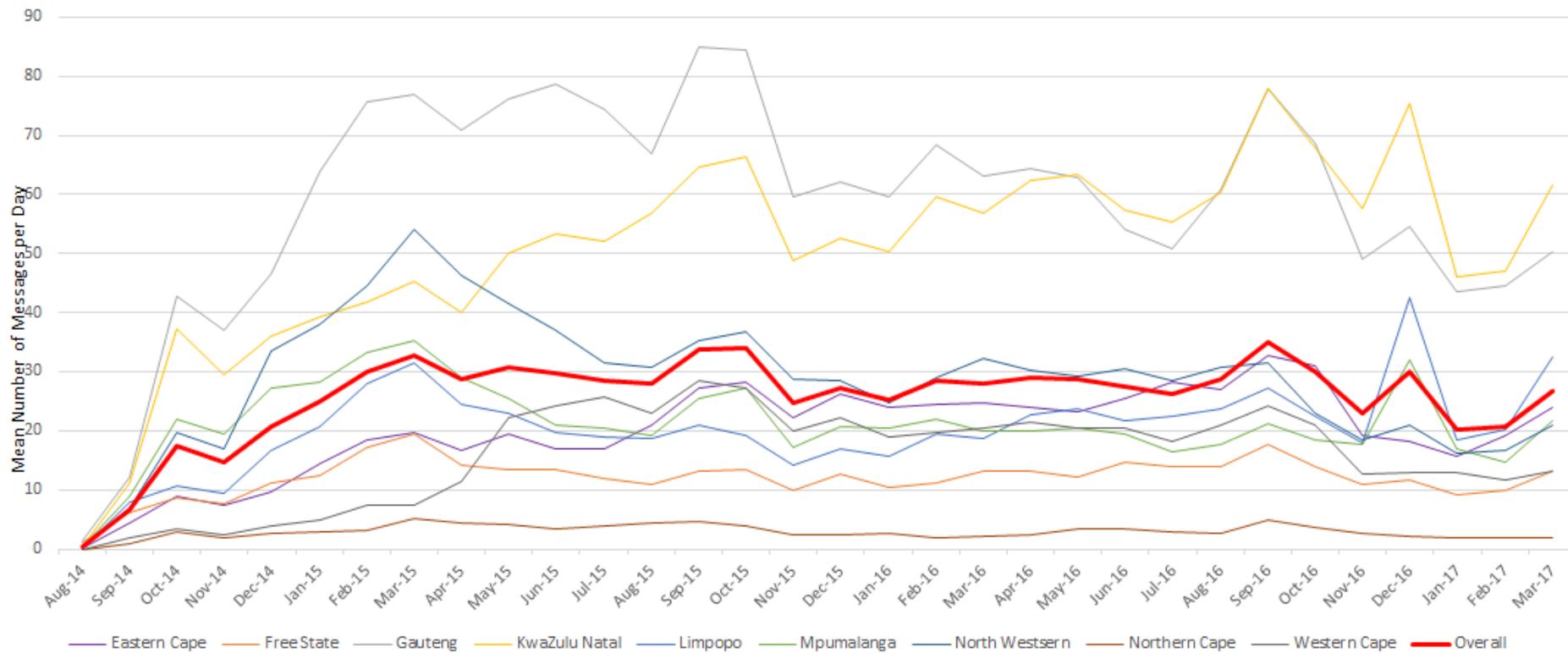
Users who  
have sent  
more than 1  
message to  
the help desk



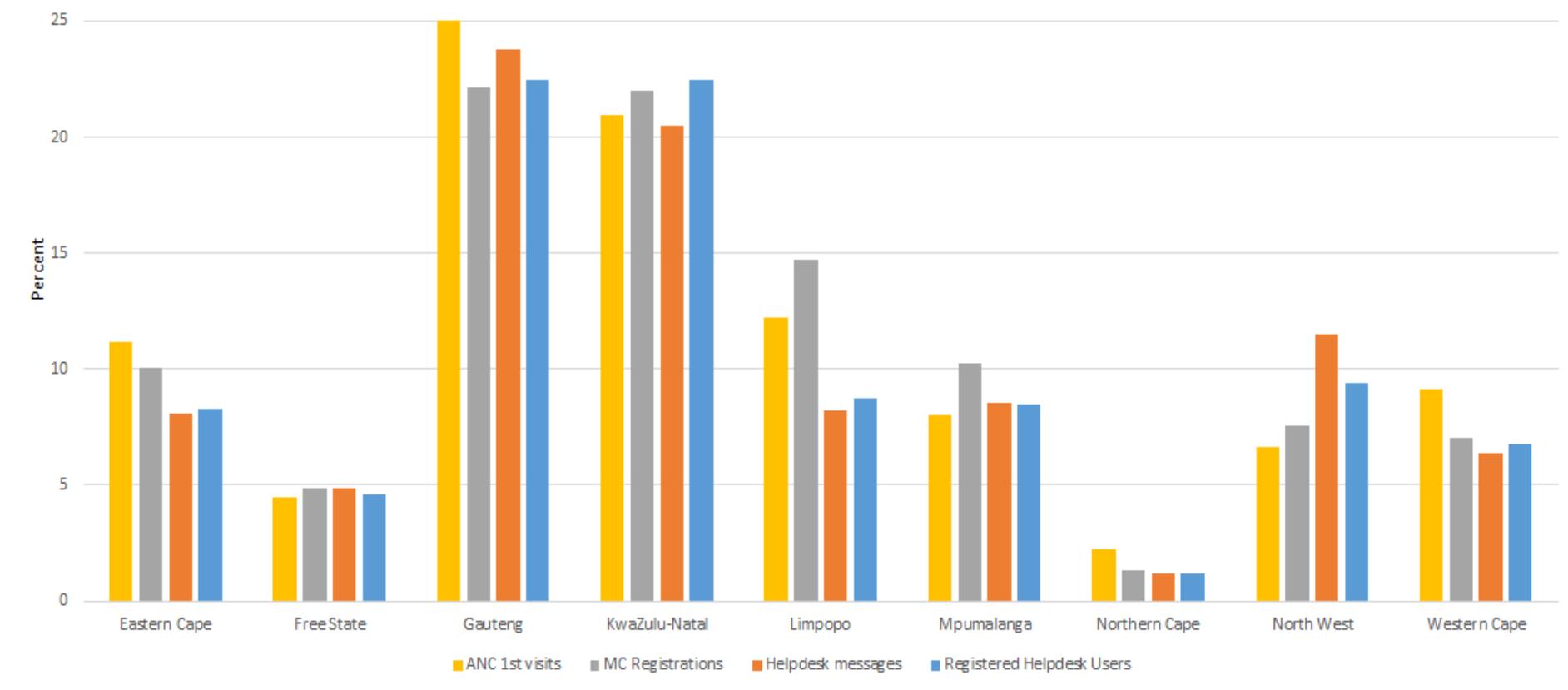
**252**

Mean no of  
messages  
received per day

# Mean number of incoming messages per day, per month, per province



# Relative proportions of ANC first visits, MomConnect registrations, helpdesk messages, and helpdesk users, per province



## Reasons for Helpdesk Use

Reason	Percentage (%)
Question	78
Clinic code	<1
Complaint	<1
Compliment	4
Message Switch	3
Opt out	<1
Other	13
PMTCT	<1

## Languages

Language	Percentage (%)
Afrikaans	2
English	65
Other	5
Sesotho	5
Xhosa	6
Zulu	17

# Lessons Learnt



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# Ten Lessons Learnt (1)

1. **Government leadership** is fundamental

2. A scaled digital health implementation requires **complex multi-stakeholder partnerships**.

3. Open-source software and open standards enable an **interoperable system** that can grow and expand as technology and requirements change.

# Ten Lessons Learnt (2)

4. SMS and USSD were the right choices originally, but there is need to use **alternative technology for registration and messaging.**

5. **Formal integration** with the public health system via facility registration & code, & helpdesk allows MomConnect to **generate demand for health services while collecting data to strengthen supply.**

6. It is possible to write **evidence-based messages** that address the most important identified perinatal and child health problems in South Africa **in language that women can understand.**

# Ten Lessons Learnt (3)

7. SMS messages increase use of the helpdesk, but as demand increases, **mechanisms to streamline and improve helpdesk responses** must be explored.

8. Large-scale mobile health programmes require **long-term commitment and earmarked funding** for core functions and innovation.

9. Messaging programmes **need monitoring throughout the complete user journey** to identify points of failure from first contact through to receipt of messages.

10: mHealth programmes should consider **evaluation from the outset**, including collection of baseline data prior to implementation.

# Summary



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# Where are we headed ?



Exploring patient engagement in MomConnect through mobile surveys



Increasing the cost-effectiveness of our platforms through <sup>L</sup><sub>SEP</sub> use of WhatsApp



Growing MomConnect into the Early Childhood development space

Embedding messages in an electronic road to health booklet

# Questions & Discussion



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