



ICEHA

The global leader in clinical skills rapid transfer to emerging nations

3rd International Conference on HIV Treatment Adherence

March 17-18, 2008

Jersey City, NJ

Title: Clinical Mentoring to Prepare Local HIV Providers in Developing Countries for Adherence Counseling and ART Initiation

Introduction:

HIV/AIDS treatment programs, with affordable antiretrovirals, are now in place in many developing countries and many governments are recognizing the importance of providing didactic training on HIV/AIDS to health workers. As HIV treatment programs grow and with many countries having very limited access to second line regimens, it is urgently important to ensure that local healthcare providers have sufficient training on the importance of adherence and how to provide effective adherence support to patients starting antiretroviral therapy. Western doctors and nurses providing hands-on mentoring to local health providers are an invaluable resource to create systems of sustainable HIV practice.

Description:

Between 09/2004 and 9/2007, The International Center for Equal Healthcare Access (ICEHA) provided nearly 5000 days of clinical mentoring to over 650 healthcare workers across 10 countries in the developing world, resulting in HIV care for tens of thousands of patients in areas where no care existed previously. Clinical mentors provide hands-on coaching to local colleagues on topics including adherence counseling, antiretroviral therapy, and monitoring patient adherence. Assessments of local health providers' skills are conducted at the beginning and end of mentor assignments to determine change over time.

Lessons Learned:

In ICEHA's clinical mentoring programs, improvement has been seen in local caregivers' knowledge of the importance of medication adherence, the frequency with which local providers communicate the importance of adherence to patients, and the ability of local providers to monitor antiretroviral medication regimens for medication adherence. These improvements have a dramatic impact on patient care and have enabled clinics to manage increasing numbers of patients on treatment with existing healthcare staff.

Recommendations:

Clinical mentoring is an important resource for countries that are scaling up HIV treatment programs. Mentors can have a strong impact on improving medication adherence to increase the success of treatment programs.

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