

Adherence Counseling for ARV Clients

Community Care Centre's Adherence Counseling is only implemented with clients who have been identified for ARV treatment. Community Care Centre starts with pre and post-test counselling and, if the client tests positive, s/he is placed on the Community Care Centre Wellness Programme. The client's CD4 count is completed and, if they qualify for ARVs, the client is then placed on the CARE Treatment and Support programme. On completion, clients receive individual adherence counseling, and are then placed on the ARVs. This whole process takes between 6 weeks to 3 months.

- Introduction

- Introduce yourself and explain the consultation is in full and strict confidence and proceed with the assessment of the reason for the visit, example, risk factors;

- History of the client's life with HIV

- Has she/he disclosed and to whom
- Knowledge of their partners status
- Other family members, children, parents
- Culture, belief system
- Home and relationship
- Substance use/abuse
- CD4 count and viral load



- Factors affecting Adherence

- Assess how much the client knows about HIV and then about ARVs and then explain the following:
- The importance of adherence and the commitment that is required;
- An understanding of what ARV therapy does to HIV, in so far as it prolongs life: by increasing the CD4 count and decreasing the viral load, and improves quality of life;
 - Explaining the importance of having a time-based method of reminder;
 - Outlining the possible side effects and what resistance the body may build up;
 - The possibility of using ARV's plus herbal and other medical treatments;
 - The need to address lifestyle issues such as smoking, alcohol and eating habits (including nutritional issues such as e-pap and tips on avoiding problems such as diarrhoea);
 - The issue of disclosure and ways of addressing possible discrimination. This involves a discussion about some of the advantages and disadvantages of disclosure;
 - The importance of using protection (condoms);
 - Explanation of the protocol related to ARVs and the types of regimens that should be followed;
 - The possibility of accessing different support and services such as the CARE support groups; and,
 - The CARE counsellor will then summarise and check their understanding of the session and explore with the client what future support they will require.

