

Training in communication and health information literacy to improve the quality of care of HIV patients in Ethiopia: CASA project holistic approach

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Context: CASA is an operational research and training project financed by the Italian Ministry of Health (2014-2015) and Italian Development Cooperation (2015-2016) to improve the quality of care of HIV/AIDS patients in the Tigray Region (Ethiopia). Research is mainly focused on the improvement of retention in care of HIV patients (Bucciardini et al, PLoS One 2015:e0136117) and is closely associated with training in communication and health information literacy.

Objectives: Developing communication skills and basic knowledge on clinical aspects of HIV to contribute improving retention of HIV patients and show the value of a multidisciplinary approach.

Methods. A multidisciplinary team including scientists, librarians, and experts in communication and IT was involved in all phases of the process leading to the definition of the training strategy which was developed according to the following steps:

- Informal meetings, discussion groups, and workshops to evaluate the local scenario and information needs of different targets
- Definition of the training target (health workers and patients associations)
- Acquisition of local needs (on-site assistance of CASA project team and local experts)
- Definition of training tools (workshops, booklets, power-point presentations, videos, online resources)
- Production of booklets, questionnaires, presentations, selection of online resources
- Preliminary evaluation of the booklets by small groups
- Translation of selected information in local language
- Definition of the local training schedule (duration, start and final dates, administration of evaluation questionnaires, distribution of training tools, active participation in local workshops, etc.)
- Training implementation (in loco and distance support)
- Certification of accomplishment
- Feasibility study of the train-the-trainer implementation
- Selection of future trainers
- Definition, implementation and evaluation to local training replication activity.

Results and discussion. The benefits of a multidisciplinary approach will be pointed out. The improvement of retention in care is expected through operational research and training in communication and health information literacy. Results from the training questionnaires will provide evidence of newly acquired knowledge, but the effectiveness of the overall training strategy will be shown one year after training implementation through the overall analysis of the project data.