

Changing HIV Treatment Expectancies: A Pilot Study

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Project Description: Adherence to antiretroviral (ARV) treatment for HIV infection is of paramount importance in secondary AIDS prevention and has potentially important implications for primary prevention of new infections. Expectancies about treatment outcome and one's ability to adhere to treatment requirements are related to adherence among persons taking antiretroviral treatment for HIV disease. What remains unknown is whether these expectancies can be altered prior to initiating treatment and whether such changes relate to adherence and clinical outcome over time. The purpose of the proposed pilot study is to develop and pilot test a one session, small group intervention with treatment naïve HIV+ adults who report planning to initiate treatment. Ten participants will be randomly assigned to attend the intervention or to a wait-list control condition and assessments will be conducted pre- and post-intervention. The two-hour session will be co- led by a nurse and a behavioral medicine psychologist and will (1) explore expectancies about treatment outcome, side effects, and confidence in one's ability to adhere and manage side effects, (2) educate participants about viral replication, the role of adherence in treatment outcome, and the likelihood of side effects, and (3) problem solve strategies to maximize adherence and manage side effects. The outcome of this pilot is not to assess whether the intervention has an impact on adherence. Rather, the goal is to test whether the intervention is feasible and acceptable and whether the intervention is successful in altering expectancies. The resulting data will be used to develop an R01 proposal to test the efficacy of an expectancy-based intervention for enhancing adherence and clinical outcome.

Project Ending Date: August 2004

Project Recruitment Dates: April through June 2004