

## Examining HAART Adherence Issues in Zimbabwe

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**Project Description:** The overall goal of this proposed study is to conduct crucial formative research on adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) among participants enrolled in drug treatment trials at the Department of Medicine's clinic at the University of Zimbabwe. We are exploring the cultural, interpersonal and individual issues that may influence adherence to ART as well as the acceptability and feasibility of different objective and subjective adherence measures in this setting. Barriers that interfere with adherence to HIV treatment as well as potential avenues to enhance adherence are being examined, using a qualitative interview. These data will subsequently be used to develop a quantitative survey that can be administered to the participants to study adherence rates and correlates in future HIV treatment trials. The results will also be used to inform the development of an adherence intervention. To achieve this, we will:

- Conduct qualitative interviews – together and separately - with 30 male and female participants enrolled in ART treatment studies at the Harare, Zimbabwe site to explore individual, interpersonal and environmental factors that may facilitate or hinder adherence to HIV treatment regimens in this cultural context.
- Examine the acceptability of different subjective and objective measures of adherence among these individuals. This will include a validated ACTG self-report instrument, in-home pill counts, electronic pill bottle caps (MEMS), and patient diaries.
- Develop a quantitative instrument assessing adherence rates and barriers, based on the themes identified in the qualitative interviews to be administered during future HIV treatment studies including HPTN 052.

**Project End Date:** June 30, 2004