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Theme: **"Effective Integration of Rapid Testing to HIV Prevention Interventions"**

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What are some of the different realities of testing at a clinic versus a community-based organization?

Clinics often receive a different type of clientele as compared to community-based organizations. In clinical settings, the circumstances under which patients come for HIV testing can largely impact the ability of clinicians to discuss behavioral risk reduction with patients, a vital piece of prevention and testing. On many occasions, patients request rapid testing in response to a certain risk behavior they have engaged in; therefore they tend to be nervous which largely hinders the effectiveness of providing HIV prevention information. In other circumstances, patients are court-ordered to receive HIV testing which often results in resistance to any information presented. The most receptive patients to HIV prevention information are usually those who come in for an STD panel, of which rapid testing is a part. The blend of HIV and STD education is often easier for these patients to receive and absorb. At community-based organizations patients usually receive an HIV/STD 101 orientation before testing and counseling, however patients are less likely to be completely honest about their behaviors in this setting.

Why is rapid testing important to include in the HIV prevention curricula? What makes this challenging?

Rapid testing, as opposed to slower methods, is important as expecting patients to return for results leads to large drop-off rates in the number of results received, thus the number of people aware of their status. It is also much more simple and effective than attempting to track patients. However, many difficulties also arise when considering rapid testing, such as the care required when transporting rapid testing kits in inclement weather and the resulting control tests that are necessary. Furthermore, rapid testing can pose

difficulties for community-based organizations in providing a confidential environment in which to get tested and receive results.

What are some possibilities for collaboration amongst organizations and agencies that provide rapid testing?

Collaboration between agencies and organizations can prove to be extremely beneficial to both parties, and most importantly the community as a whole. Health departments often have access to the resources and staff necessary to provide effective rapid testing services, while community-based organizations tend to have better relations and trust within the community. As hard as many health departments try to express to the public that they are safe, confidential, and non-judgmental venues for testing, the most effective means of getting members of the public into these facilities is through community-based organization recommendations. Partnerships are often the most effective way to develop this kind of rapport with organizations/health departments and the community as a whole.

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