

Module 0:

Importance of HTC



Learning objectives (1)

By the end of this unit, participants will be able to:

- Identify HTC clients
- List the goals of HTC
- Identify the 5 key guiding principles in the counselling process

Learning Objectives (2)

- Define the 4 types of HTC and where they are conducted
- Describe who does HTC in Malawi
- Describe the drivers of the HIV epidemic in Malawi and current strategies to address them



Definition of HTC

The process through which an individual or couple is confidentially counselled AND tested for HIV



Who Are Our Clients?





HTC is an Important Intervention

- Malawi has among the highest prevalence of HIV in the world at 10.6% (MDHS 2010)
- About 1 million Malawians are living with HIV; 100,000 are children under age 15
- 110,000 new HIV infections occur each year
 - 88% through hetero-sexual intercourse
 - 10% from mother-to-child transmission



What are the goals of HTC?

- Prevent or minimize exposure to HIV
- Prevent or minimize re-exposure and further transmission
- Mitigate the impact of HIV through psychosocial support to infected and affected
- Serve as an entry point to HIV treatment, care and supportive services



Guiding Principles of HTC

The 5Cs

Consent

Confidentiality

Counselling

Correct test
results

Continuum of
Care



Drivers of the HIV epidemic in Malawi



Drivers of HIV in Malawi (1)

- Multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships
- Discordancy in long-term couples (one partner HIV negative, one HIV positive)
- Late initiation of HIV treatment.
- TB/HIV co-epidemic
- Low and inconsistent condom use
- Poor implementation of HIV prevention interventions within clinical settings (including HTC)



Drivers of HIV in Malawi (2)

- Transactional sex related to income and other social and material benefits
- Gender inequalities/imbbalances including masculinity
- Harmful cultural practices
- Stigma and discrimination
- Low prevalence of male circumcision (currently 21%)



Malawi's HIV Prevention Strategy

- ***Strategic Objectives:***

1. Reduce sexual transmission of HIV
2. Prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission of HIV
3. Prevent HIV transmission through blood, blood products and invasive instruments



Reduce sexual transmission of HIV

- Reduce multiple and concurrent sexual partners among adults and youth
- Reinforce both primary and secondary abstinence for young people
- Scale-up positive prevention among PLHIV
- Reduce HIV transmission among HIV discordant couples
- Provide timely access to ART
- Increase access to VMMC
- Increase condom use
- Reduce intergenerational sex

2. Prevent MTCT

- Provide universal HTC for women and their partners, adolescents in child bearing age
- Increase access and quality of PMTCT services
- Strengthen linkages between complementary services
- Increase access to family planning and HIV prevention services
- Provide comprehensive care and treatment to HIV+ pregnant and breastfeeding women and their families
- Provide care and support to all HIV exposed infants
- Promote integration of PMTCT with HTC and ART services
- Promote male and community involvement in PMTCT

3. Prevent transmission through blood, blood products, medical procedures

- Increase proportion of voluntary blood donors to 80%
- Encourage voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation
- Ensure 100% of blood supply accurately screened for HIV
- Promote appropriate clinical use of blood
- Promote implementation of infection prevention in all health facilities
- Ensure access to PEP



Key points (1)

- HTC clients include individuals, couples, pregnant women, infants, children, adolescents, and youth
- The goals of HTC are to:
 - Prevent or minimize exposure/re-exposure to HIV
 - Mitigate the impact of HIV through psychosocial support to infected and affected
 - Serve as an entry point to HIV treatment, care and supportive services

Key Points (2)

- The 5 Cs must be respected and adhered to by all HTC services
- All HTC providers should be familiar with the drivers of the epidemic and the strategies put in place to address them

