

PILOT MODEL TO REDUCE HIV-RELATED STIGMA & DISCRIMINATION IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS

IN HO CHI MINH CITY, VIET NAM (2016-2017)

Implementing organization:

Ho Chi Minh City Provincial AIDS Center
(HCMC PAC)

With :

Viet Nam Administration for HIV/AIDS
Prevention and Control (VAAC)
Department of Health of Ho Chi Minh
City (HCMC DOH)
Viet Nam Network of People living with
HIV (Southern office) (VNP+)

Between September 2016 and Decem-
ber 2017

Thanks to support from UNAIDS, M.A.C.
AIDS Fund and UN Delivering Results
Together (DRT) Fund

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1 Background information and Rationale

Viet Nam has committed to the new testing and treatment targets of 90-90-90 by 2020 and the global target of ending AIDS by 2030. Stigma and discrimination (S&D) in healthcare are considered formidable barriers to the achievement of these ambitious targets. Furthermore, due to Viet Nam's relatively new status as a middle income country, funding for development has been reduced sharply, especially for the national HIV response. For further sustainability and as the HIV response is being integrated into the general healthcare system, strengthening of capacity for health-care workers in the area of S&D will be necessary. A UNAIDS "fast track" effort was launched in 2015, with an emphasis on innovative interventions in big cities; Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) was included as one of the world's large cities meriting special "fast track" attention. This pilot effort to reduce S&D in healthcare settings was part of this special approach. It was implemented in three health facilities in Ho Chi Minh City.

2 Purpose

To adapt and pilot survey and interventions for reducing HIV related stigma and discrimination in health care settings in HCMC.

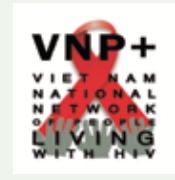
"Discriminatory acts and practice come from limited awareness and knowledge of HIV, HIV transmission or universal precautions among healthcare workers in our hospital. Participatory trainings with storytelling session by VNP+ members with healthcare workers proved useful and led to initial changes"

Dr Le Tien Dung, Vice Director of Pham Ngoc Thach Hospital

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3 Actions

The model included two major components:

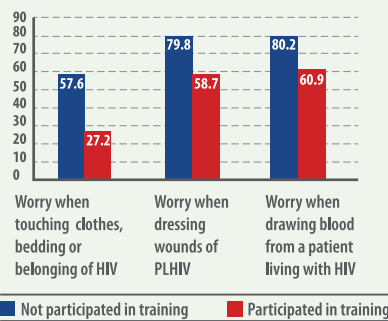
- Assessment of S&D in healthcare settings: survey tool adaptation and field test, data collection and management training, baseline and end-line surveys on HIV related S&D in healthcare settings among healthcare workers and PLHIV.
- Interventions on reducing HIV related S&D in healthcare settings: training manual adaptation and pre-test, training of trainers, training for healthcare workers at one hospital with PLHIV as co-trainers, development of a code of practice at one hospital, regular monitoring and support post-training.



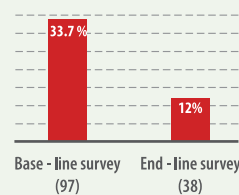
"Thanks to this initiative, the partnership between healthcare workers and myself has much improved with better mutual understanding. I can now easily come and seek support from healthcare workers when it is difficult to connect people living with HIV to HIV care and treatment and other health services. I hope that this initiative will be expanded more widely for the benefit of people living with HIV in Viet Nam."

Nguyen Anh Phong, VNP+ Steering Committee member, Ho Chi Minh City

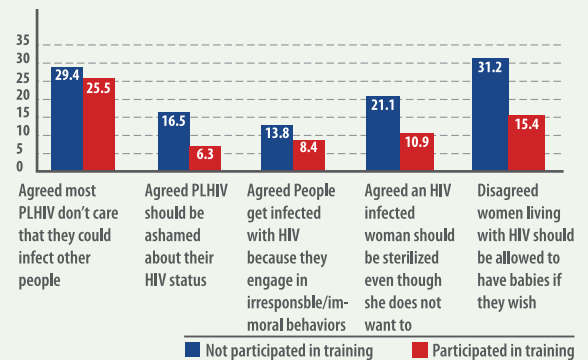
4 Results and outcomes



Lower percentage of fear of HIV infection among HCWs who participated in the training when touching the clothing, bedding or belongings of a patient living with HIV, dressing the wound of PLHIV, drawing blood of PLHIV patients.



Percentage of HCWs reporting wearing double gloves as over-protection measure during the last 3 months reduced in all of the three health facilities.



Lower percentage of negative opinions towards PLHIV among HCWs who participated in the S&D training

5 Lessons learnt – CRITICAL FACTORS OF SUCCESS

- Leadership by the City's health and AIDS authorities and health facilities managers;
- Strong engagement of people living with HIV and key populations;
- Measurement of S&D in health care settings is necessary to develop evidence based interventions aimed at improving the quality of health care services;
- Participatory training approach with healthcare workers to share views & agree on action; and
- Dialogue between patients and health care providers to better understand S&D issues and health facilities' procedures.

This model and lessons learned are used to inform:



- Development of national action plan to reduce HIV related S&D in healthcare settings;
- Development of a new Ministry of Health's Directive to strengthen reduction of HIV related S&D in healthcare and SOP; and
- Replication of the model in other HIV high burden provinces with support by different partners.