

In this issue:

- MTN Regional Meeting
- Conducting brief, flexible counseling sessions at Months 6-9 visits
- Residual Drug level messaging
- Updated PUEV flip chart

MTN Regional Meeting

We cannot overstate how wonderful it was for our NY team to meet all of you at the MTN Regional Meeting! It has been a joy and an honor to work with you all over the past year, and we look forward to what we can accomplish together over the next year. Here are a few of the photos from the meeting. For more, please see our online album at: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/TNMgokMZpDYIjNhs1>



Conducting brief, flexible sessions at follow-up

We have heard from some sites that participants find the sessions repetitive and that some participants are in a hurry and try to rush them through the session. Now that you all have been conducting follow-up sessions for a while and you are familiar with the material, you can conduct briefer sessions if you have a participant who has a time constraint, and you can make the session more flexible and tailored to the participant's needs. During the Regional Meeting, Ivan modeled how to conduct a good session that covers all of the necessary points in just six minutes! Here are a few things to keep in mind for brief sessions:

- Let the participant know that you are aware she is in a hurry and you will quickly go through the session so she is not further delayed
- Make sure to remain client-centered—collaborative, evocative, and empathic
- Don't skip steps in the session, but if everything is going well with the participant, feel free to explore less during certain parts of the session (i.e., obstacles, knowledge about residual drug level)
- Use humor to engage the participant in tasks
- Ask questions that evoke "change talk"—participants' statements about why Ring use and remaining HIV negative is important to them—in order to sustain the participant's motivation to continue to protect herself
- Be curious about successes and about what helped the participant succeed
- Thank the participant and affirm her for staying for the counseling session

Residual Drug Level Messaging

In providing drug level feedback to participants, we aim to give them information to help them make decisions about Ring use for HIV prevention. The goal is not for participants to feel disheartened if they do not get a "3" for every Ring, especially since the cutoff between a "2" and "3" is a very fine line. However, we do want to make sure that participants who consistently get a "0" are aware that Ring use is a choice. As such, the HOPE Adherence Working Group came up with a few messages to keep in mind:

1 is an opportunity to improve.

2 is fine for you!

If a 0, is the Ring right for you??

Updated PUEV Flip Chart

Based on your feedback during the PUEV practice at the Regional Meeting, we have made some minor changes to the PUEV flipchart pages to better help participants develop an HIV prevention plan that does not include the Ring. These changes still have to be approved by the site IRBs, but in the meantime, feel free to skip questions in the PUEV flipchart that do not make sense as these will be removed from the revised version:

Slide 38: removed point about sharing results to help ppt decide about Ring use

Keep in mind...

The drug level results may not be 100% accurate

We share the results with you...

- So you have a general idea of the level of protection you are receiving from the Ring
- ~~To help you decide whether you want to use the Ring differently so that it gives you more protection from HIV~~

What you do with this information is your choice

38

Slide 39: removed point about how RD level may influence plan to remain HIV negative

Your level of protection

No Protection ————— High Protection

0 1 2 3

What are your thoughts about this?
How do you feel about the level of protection you got from the Ring?
~~What might this mean for you remaining HIV negative?~~

39

Slide 41: removed points about obstacles and overcoming them, added piece about prompting ppt to think about which approaches have worked best

Check-In

How did things go with your HIV prevention plan?

What worked?
What didn't?

Think back...

Which HIV prevention approaches have worked best for you during the study?

41

Updated PUEV Flip Chart (cont'd)

Slide 42: added new slide to show all of the possible prevention options except the Ring, including abstinence and "other" to prompt discussion of options to use going forward

Which HIV Prevention Options do you want to use going forward?

- Abstinence
- Use condoms consistently
- Encourage partner to get circumcised
- Use oral PrEP
- Reduce your number of sex partners
- Engage in lower-risk sexual behaviours
- Other.....
- If your partner is HIV+, encourage ARV adherence
- Encourage partner to get tested for HIV
- Get treatment for STIs

Slide 43: changed to focus on developing a plan for using HIV prevention options in the future

Future HIV Prevention Plans

What is your plan for using the approaches you selected?

- What can you do to make sure you succeed?
- What obstacles might come up and how might you overcome them?

**Translated Versions
Coming Soon!**