



# Fundamentals of HIV Patient Navigation for Community-Based Organizations

**Patient navigators and case managers** assist clients through the process of accessing medical care and other support services. Patient navigators and case managers also assist medical providers by preparing clients for their appointments to ensure client engagement. Beginning in the initial meeting, the patient navigator works to identify and resolve any barriers that inhibit clients' access to medical and support services for timely treatment. Such barriers vary from client to client, and include, but are not limited to: housing; cost/coverage; mental health issues; substance use; health care literacy; and stigma, especially associated with a client's sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or HIV status.

HIV and AIDS present a unique cluster of barriers, and require multidisciplinary services to ensure optimal care and retention. Patient navigators serve as a reliable and stable resource and contact as a client moves through the medical system and accesses support services. Patient navigators are especially important in addressing the first three steps of the HIV Care Continuum<sup>1</sup>: diagnosis, linkage and retention in care. However, they can also assist clients with access to antiretroviral (ART) therapy and staying on it, covering the entire continuum from diagnosis to viral suppression. The patient navigator also serves as a central communicator and link between a client and medical provider. It is important that the patient navigator understand the life context of the clients served in order to maximize client-navigator trust.

## Different Components of Patient Navigation Models:

**Strengths-Based Approach:** identifies, supports, and builds on clients' individual capacities, competencies, values, and hopes, toward the goal of personal empowerment and resilience. Essentially, encourages self-reliance and autonomy.<sup>2</sup> ARTAS (Anti-Retroviral Treatment and Access to Services), an evidence-based intervention, focuses on initial linkage to medical care for newly diagnosed people living with HIV and is based on strengths-based case management.

**Motivational Interviewing (MI):** a theory-based, empirically valid approach that helps to change behaviors by examining and overcoming ambivalence that keeps many people from changing.<sup>3</sup> Essentially, encourages behavior change.

**Transtheoretical Model (AKA: Stages of Change):** provides a way to assess clients' readiness to adopt health-promoting behaviors.<sup>4</sup> Essentially, assesses whether or not a client is emotionally ready to make behavior changes.

**Self-Management Support (the five 'As' for patient-centered counseling):** provides a sequence of evidence-based clinician and office practice behaviors (Assess, Advise, Agree, Assist, and Arrange) that can be applied in primary care settings to address a broad range of behaviors and health conditions. It allows the clinician to 'walk' patients through the 5As at a given visit, and to later re-assess progress in meeting collaboratively set goals.



<sup>1</sup>HIV/AIDS Care Continuum: <http://aids.gov/federal-resources/policies/care-continuum/>

<sup>2</sup> Glasgow R E et al. Health Promot. Int. 2006;21:245-255

<sup>3,4</sup> Bradford J B et al. HIV System Navigation: An Emerging Model to Improve HIV Care Access. 2007; S-51

## Examples of Patient Navigation Models:

### SPECIFIC TO PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS (PLWHA)

**Optimizing Entry Into and Retention in HIV Care and ART Adherence for PLWHA:** A train-the-trainer manual designed to extend peer educators' role to patient navigation by engaging PLWHA around enhancing entry into HIV care, promoting ART adherence, and facilitating long-term retention in HIV care. The curriculum consists of an intensive one-day course based on published global guidelines outlining evidence-based interventions.

**The HIV and AIDS Navigation Services (HANS) curriculum:** Currently under development by AIDS Project Los Angeles and the Denver Prevention Training Center with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Not yet accessible to the public.** Will be completed by the end of 2014 and available in 2015.

Both resources can be found at:

[www.effectiveinterventions.org/en/HighImpactPrevention/BiomedicalInterventions/PatientNavigation.aspx](http://www.effectiveinterventions.org/en/HighImpactPrevention/BiomedicalInterventions/PatientNavigation.aspx)

### ALL HEALTH CONDITIONS

**Patient Navigator Training Collaborative:** The Collaborative offers a full curriculum designed to build patient navigator skills and knowledge. It focuses on patient navigators in clinical settings. Classes are available for new and experienced patient navigators through face-to-face, online or self-paced eLearning modules. Available at: [patientnavigatortraining.org/](http://patientnavigatortraining.org/)

**Peers for Progress - Peer Support Around the World:** Peers for Progress promotes peer support as a key part of health, health care, and prevention around the world. The program is designed to demonstrate the value of peer support, extend the evidence base for such interventions, help establish peer support as an accepted, core component of health care, and promote peer support programs and networks around the world. Available at: [peersforprogress.org/](http://peersforprogress.org/)

## Patient Navigator Key Tasks:

1. Establish a personal and trusted connection with the client
2. Assist client to identify barriers to care
3. Facilitate client developing of an action plan to address barriers
4. Identify additional key players to assist with client's access and retention in care
5. Support client through timely communication to ensure optimal treatment adherence and retention in care through viral suppression

## Resources

### Videos:

- Patient Navigators: A Step in the Right Direction, <http://bit.ly/1x1w9FU>
- Patient Navigator Introduction to Motivational Interviewing Workshop, <http://bit.ly/1J3NB2G>
- The Art and Science of Person- and Family - Centered Care, [www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/AudioandVideo/ArtandScienceofPFCC.aspx](http://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/AudioandVideo/ArtandScienceofPFCC.aspx)

### Peer-Review Journal Articles:

- HIV System Navigation: An Emerging Model to Improve HIV Care Access, [online.liebertpub.com/doi/abs/10.1089/apc.2007.9987](http://online.liebertpub.com/doi/abs/10.1089/apc.2007.9987)
- Patient Navigation is a Client-Centered Approach that Helps to Engage People in HIV Care, [www.deltaaetc.com](http://www.deltaaetc.com)
- Guiding Lights: Peer Navigators Help Others After Finding Their Own Way, [http://issuu.com/positivelyaware/docs/summer\\_2012\\_\\_clickable\\_](http://issuu.com/positivelyaware/docs/summer_2012__clickable_)



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CBA@JSI offers assistance to community-based organizations that provide HIV prevention services in the U.S. and its territories to strengthen their High-Impact HIV prevention programs. Learn more about how JSI can help your organization at [www.cba.jsi.com](http://www.cba.jsi.com).