AETC-NMC
AIDS Education and Training Center
National Multicultural Center
HOWARD UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Case Study Adapted from Addressing HIV Care and Latino Model

Anna is an 18-year-old Hispanic student who was infected with HIV four years ago during a sexual encounter with a 30-year-old man. She entered care in a pediatric HIV clinic two years ago when her diagnosis was confirmed after testing was recommended by a neighbor who was also a *curandera*. Except for fatigue and frequent headaches, Anna has remained asymptomatic. Her viral load has been consistently < 500 copies/mL and her CD4+ T cell count has not gone below 800 cells/mm^3.

When Anna graduated from high school, she moved to a city where she started junior college and found a part time job. She was referred to an HIV clinic near campus where she was scheduled to see Dr. Kraig, a specialist with 10 years of HIV care experience. At her first visit to the clinic, Dr. Kraig rushed into the exam room, introduced himself, apologized for being late, looked at her chart, and said, "Well, we can't do anything until we have some labs run." He filled out a lab form, handed it to her, and said, "Go see the phlebotomist and make an appointment for next week . . . OK?" Anna nodded and Dr. Kraig left.

Discussion Questions

1. How do you think Anna felt after that encounter?

2. What assumptions might Dr. Kraig have made to prompt his actions?

3. What do we – and Dr. Kraig – know about Anna's health literacy level and her understanding of HIV infection? What would you like to know?

4. Who has the power in this interaction? How might the dynamic have been changed? Should it have been changed? Did Anna have any responsibility in this situation?

5. It appears that Dr. Kraig was having a busy day. What can be done in these situations to create better provider-client interactions?

6. What things should be considered when an adolescent moves from pediatric to adult care? Is this a cultural issue? How or how not?

7. Based on the case study discussion, what legal issues showed be addressed in an action plan for Anna's care?

8. Discuss other Cultural Competence issues that may impact retention into care and treatment.