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

Case Study Adapted from Addressing HIV Care and Transgender Communities

Jenice is a 25 year old African American transgender male to female person, presented to the hospital following an altercation with her new lover, Tony. She reported being thrown from the third floor balcony by Tony who thought she was born female. During their tryst Tony found out that Jenice was transgendered. Jenice suffered several broken bones and injuries.

On the front of the chart, the patient was listed as male but, preferred to be addressed as Jenice. She requested that only female medical personnel enter her room. A third year male resident physician was assigned to care for the patient; he required that a female medical student accompany him. It was very apparent that the patient and resident physician were uncomfortable during the encounter. Jenice never made eye contact with the resident physician and would only speak to the student.

On leaving Jenice's room, the resident physician referred to her as a "she-male". Jenice overheard him.

It was discovered that the patient was HIV positive, refused to take anti-retrovirals and had little to no family support.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the best way to proceed in this case?
2. How can barriers to care be identified and overcome with Jenice?
3. How could the resident physician be more culturally sensitive?
4. Should members of the hospital be legally involved in Jenice's altercation with his partner?
5. What kind of support or resources can you get for Jenice?
6. Discuss other Cultural Competence issues that may impact retention into care and treatment.