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

Case Study Adapted from Addressing HIV Care and the Triple Whammy (African American, HIV and Psychiatric Illness)

Ms. Turner, an African American woman, has a triple diagnosis: HIV+, paranoid schizophrenia, and alcoholism. She was referred to you, the primary care physician, by her social worker. She is not taking any medications for either HIV or her mental diagnosis. She refused to take them.

Her social worker, nurse, and you have all noticed her psychosis as she speaks and rambles. She lives in a group home, and has become friends with Mr. J, who lives there also.

She reports drinking "a couple of half-pints" of hard liquor every day. She has started threatening Mr. J that if he doesn't have sex with her, she will accuse him of raping her. Her lab results show her CD4+ T cell count is 130 cells/mm^3 and her viral load is 500,000 copies/mL.

Discussion Questions

1- How will you treat her psychiatric complications?

2- What kind of support or resources can you get for her?

3- What is the next step if she continues to refuse treatment?

4- Do you have an ethical obligation with Mr. J?

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