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

Case Study Adapted from Addressing HIV Care and African American Model

Carol, a 35-year-old woman of African descent, comes to the clinic for a follow-up visit after having an HIV test. Upon receiving her results through the post-counseling interview, it is discovered that Carol is really Carl, a 35-year-old man who has recently been released from prison.

Further discussion reveals that Carl participated in receptive anal sex while he was incarcerated. When asked about his sexual orientation, he insists he is heterosexual and goes on to explain that now that he is HIV positive he can never return to his native country in the Caribbean because of the stigma attached to HIV/AIDS.

He gives a series of expressions in Patois that would be used to describe a person like him and what would be done to such a person. Clearly, Carol is dealing with a series of issues that may pose a challenge to the health care professional.

Discussion Questions

1. As a health care professional, what can you do to increase your understanding of this patient's culture so that you can get this patient into treatment?

2. How can you find out the meaning of the Patois expressions to better understand this patient's issues and provide appropriate medical care?

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