

SUPPORTING YOUR PEERS TO START ART

Your role as a CATS in supporting your client to start treatment is to:

- Give information on HIV, ART and adherence in a way they can understand
- Make sure your client has the understanding they need to make decisions and be involved in their healthcare
- Support caregivers and clinic staff to talk to clients about HIV and ART
- Share your own experience of starting ART
- Advocate for their right to be provided with services and be involved in their health care decisions
- Work with other clinic staff to support the ART readiness assessment
- Flag challenges that need referral before ART is started
- Make referrals and actively link them to enhanced support and services
- Participate in case conferences
- Join the multidisciplinary team in providing enhanced support
- Connect the client to a support group



Supporting Your Peers To Start ART



Where:

Clinic
Home



When:

Before starting ART or
After the clinic staff have provided ART



What topics to cover

- Feelings about being HIV positive and starting ART
- What they know about HIV and ART
- HIV and how it acts in the body
- How ART works
- What to expect on ART
- Names of medications, what they look like, and when to take them
- What to do when you feel unwell on ART
- Common side effects
- Explore lifestyle changes
- How we check that the ART is working
- Benefits of ART and importance adherence
- Avoiding harmful results of non-adherence
- What can help them to adhere
- What can make adherence difficult
- Others who can give support to adhere and attend services e.g. Family, friends, CATS, support groups
- Regular clinic attendance and blood test
- Practical adherence tips
- Any questions or worries
- Any red flags for referral

Additional points for caregivers

- Understanding of HIV, ART and adherence
- Importance of talking about HIV and ART
- Caregivers role in supporting their child to adhere and encouraging acceptance of HIV, ART and their child's involvement in their healthcare
- Encouraging and agreeing on access to support services
- Available services for the caregiver

Supporting Your Peers To Adhere To ART

Your role as a CATS in supporting your client to adhere to their treatment is to:

- Give information on HIV, ART and adherence in a way they can understand – individually or in groups
- Make sure your client has the understanding they need to make decisions and be involved in their healthcare
- Support caregivers and clinic staff to talk to clients about the HIV, ART and the importance of adherence
- Share your own experience of dealing with adherence challenges
- Advocate for their right to be provided with services and be involved in their health care decisions
- Look for changes in their clients' adherence
- Assist with disclosure issues
- Explore and understand the challenges they may be facing
- Work with the clinic to support your client to understand their viral load, access viral load testing and make a plan when their viral load is high
- Help them to identify practical solutions
- Provide support and encouragement
- Flag challenges that need referral
- Make referrals and actively link them to enhanced support and services
- Participate in case conferences
- Work with the clinic and your ZM to provide enhanced support

Supporting Your Peers To Adhere To ART



Where:

Home
Clinic
Support Group
SMS/ Whats App



When:

Monthly for all CAYP supported by CATS
Weekly for those with a viral load greater than 1000 or those with adherence challenges



What topics to cover

- **Signs or reports of feeling unwell**

- Recent hospital admissions
- New signs of feeling unwell
 - *Health Check In*

- **Knowledge of their ART**

- Names of medications and how often to take them
- Any side effects
- Chosen medication time
 - What they are doing when they take it
 - Where they are when they take it

- **Adherence check**

- Exploring successes and challenges
 - Adherence Check-In
- Problem identification and solutions
 - Practical tips box and red flags for referral
- Acknowledge that adherence can be hard, recognise and encourage efforts
- Personal goals and dreams for the future and how ART helps to achieve them

- **Enough supply of ART**

- Reasons for too many or not enough tablets

- Plan for restocking ART

- **Understanding of HIV, ART and adherence**

- What they know about HIV and ART
- HIV and how it acts in the body
- How ART works
- Benefits of ART
- Importance of adherence

- **Latest CD4 count and viral load**

- *Blood Results Check-In*
- Understanding of the results
- Feelings about the results
- Exploring reasons for blood results changes
- Date for next blood check

- **Current support for adherence**

- Family or friends
- Disclosure for more support (disclosure)
- Support available through Zvandiri – SMS/WhatsApp reminders, support group, more home visits

- **Next clinic appointment or refill visit**

- Any potential challenges in attending
- Available SMS or Whats App reminders for clinic attendance

- **Any questions or worries**

- **Any red flags for referrals**

Health Check-In

- Do you have a bad headache?
- Do you have a cough?
- Have you been sweating while you sleep?
- Do you have a fever?
- Have you lost a lot of weight recently?



Adherence Check-In:



- How have you been doing with your treatment?
- In the last week, how many doses have you missed? How many in the last month?
- Exploring reasons for non-adherence:
 - Think about the times you took your tablets, what helped?
 - Think about the time you missed your tablets, what was different?
 - Have you struggled with taking your ART in the past?
 - What helped you then? What do you think could help now?
- What encourages you to take your ART every day?



Blood Results Check-In:

- Go through the patient booklet or clinic record with your client
- CD4
 - *What is your latest CD4 count?*
 - *Is it up or down from your last one?*
 - *Can you explain to me what this means?*
- Viral Load
 - *What was your latest Viral Load?*
 - *Is it up or down from your last one?*
 - *Can you explain to me what this means?*
 - *What is a high viral load?*
 - *What does a 'target not detectable' (TND) viral load mean?*
- *When is your next CD4 count or Viral Loads due?*





RED FLAG

- Any client who
 - Does not want to take ART or attend services
 - Is not coping with their HIV status
 - Shares negative thoughts about adherence to ART
 - Does not have a caregiver or support system
 - Does not want to change ART e.g. to second line
 - Is 10 years and over and is unaware of their HIV status
 - Continues to forget to take ARVs despite reminders
 - Has a CD4 less than 100
 - Hasn't had a recent viral load
 - Has a viral load greater than 1000
 - Has a high viral load and is very unwell or is losing weight
 - Has a high viral load that has not been acted on during the last 3 months
 - Is receiving enhanced support but their health is getting worse
 - Recent death of caregiver or change in caregiver
 - Answers yes to 1 or more of the Health Check-In questions
 - Feels very unwell
 - Pregnant or partner is pregnant
 - Has difficulty swallowing ART
 - Is identified as 'high risk' for a mental health condition using the Zvandiri Mental Health Screening Tool (See Mental Health Section)
 - Answers yes to 1 or more of the Social Protection Check-In questions (See Social Protection Section)
- Caregivers who:
 - Do not want their child to take ART
 - Share negative feelings to HIV and ART
 - Do not want their child to access services

ART and Adherence



Urgent

Contact the clinic immediately by phone if:

1) Your client shows or reports signs of:

- Shortness of breath
- Too weak to walk
- Blurred vision
- Stiff neck
- Seizures
- Severe pain

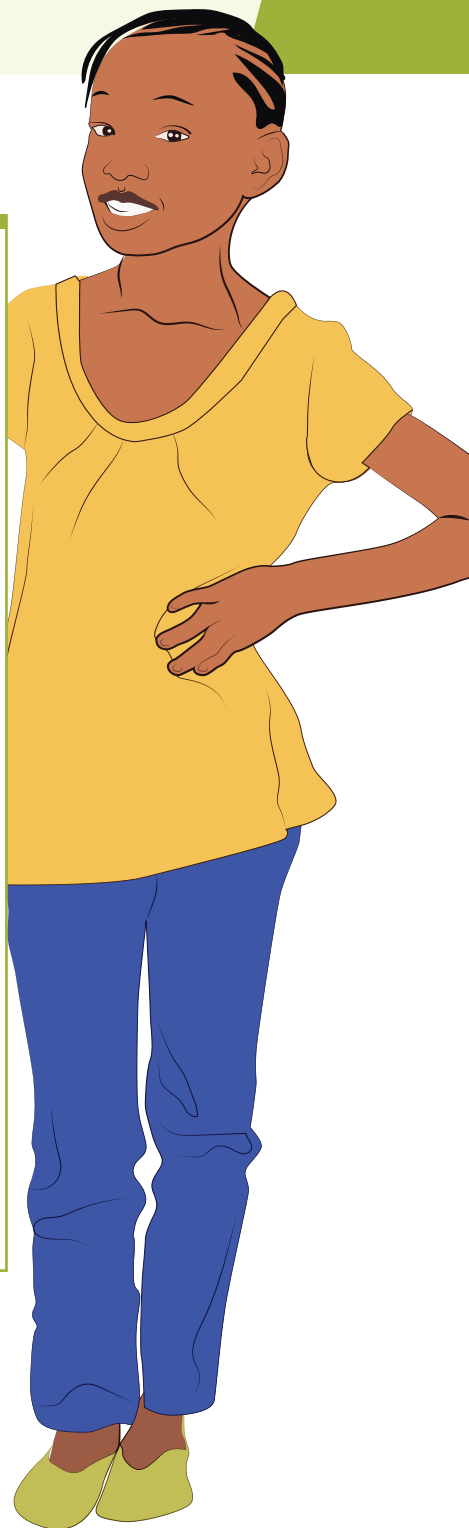
2) Discuss with your ZM and Clinic if your client:

- Has a CD4 less than 100
- Has a high viral load and is not feeling well or is losing weight
- Has a high viral load that has not been acted on during the last 3 months



Enhanced Support For Adherence

- Work with your client, the caregiver, the clinic and your ZM to make an enhanced support plan
 - When your client should come to clinic for enhanced adherence counselling
 - When CATS will provide support through home visits, SMS or Whats App and support group
 - How the caregiver can provide support including directly observed therapy
 - When joint visits will be made e.g. with a community nurse or social protection services
 - When they should repeat their viral load
 - What to do if the viral load remains high
 - What to do if your client gets sick
- If the viral load is still high discuss with your ZM and clinic what to do next
- Support with counselling and information
 - Explore problems and solutions
 - Second or third line ART



Adherence Practical Tips

Adherence Practical Tips		
Problems	Solutions	
Limited understanding	Use adherence tools i.e. games and IEC booklet Facilitate support group attendance	Share your experiences and refer any red flags
Forgetting	Use pill box Use Alarms and SMS or WhatsApp reminders Link to daily activities i.e. a meal time Find a treatment buddy	
Being away from home	Find a safe private place to keep medications Carry an extra supply Know where your nearest clinic is if you run out (i.e. visiting family)	
No way to tell the time	Link to daily activities	
Lack privacy	Facilitate discussion with the caregiver Review timing of ART Find different storage containers Brainstorm good place to hide them, for example in a kitchen cabinet, with caregiver etc. Explore disclosure for support If in boarding school, encourage contact with supportive teacher or other staff	
Too many pills	Talk about the importance of the different medications Encourage talking to clinic staff about other solutions	
Fear of side effects	Talk about the importance of ART Encourage talking to clinic staff rather than stopping!	

Adherence Practical Tips

Adherence Practical Tips		
Problems	Solutions	
Bored, feeling low, unmotivated, or have negative feelings towards ART	Use adherence tools i.e. games and IEC booklet Recognise their feelings and that adherence can be hard Encourage their efforts Facilitate support group attendance Remind them that ARVs can help them to achieve these goals for the future Conduct Zvandiri Mental Health Screening Tool (See Mental Health Section)	Share your experiences and refer any red flags
No adherence support at home	Facilitate support group attendance Increase home visit frequency by CATS and the ZM Explore disclosing to other for more support	
Stigma at home/ from other household members	Talk with your client and the other household members if safe Involve the CATS focal point at the clinic and ZM for support If your client is at risk of harm contact social protection services and your ZM See Social Protection Section	
Not enough food at home	Discuss with caregivers if possible See Social Protection Section	
Substance use or abuse Drinking alcohol or taking drugs	Encourage the client to take their pills before they go out at night Explore the effects of alcohol on ART and ART on alcohol Conduct Zvandiri Mental Health Screening Tool (See Mental Health Section)	
Religious or cultural beliefs that don't support adherence	Refer to your CATS focal person at the clinic See the Social Protection Sections	