



INTRODUCTION

South Africa has adopted the UNAIDS 90-90-90 strategy that aims to bring the HIV epidemic under control. To achieve this, those who are living with HIV must be identified, tested, put on Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART), and be virally suppressed. It is critical to identify people living with HIV who do not know their status. They should then be put on ART to keep them virally suppressed. The challenge presented by the 90-90-90 strategy is to identify HIV cases. It should be addressed by using innovative HIV testing modalities. HIV counselling and rapid testing is the entry-way to the continuum of care.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is about HIV counselling and rapid testing to equip all healthcare providers and health workers with the knowledge and skills to perform HIV counselling and rapid testing confidently, accurately and reliably in a safe and professional manner, and to provide HIV Testing Services (HTS) effectively. The course offers a standardised approach of integrating HIV counselling and rapid testing in both clinical and community-based settings. The protocol for service includes patient or client education; informing the patient or client about the importance of testing for HIV and knowing one's HIV status; and linkage to appropriate HIV prevention, treatment care services and other clinical and support services.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Primary healthcare providers (doctors and nurses).
- Healthcare workers (community healthcare workers; home-based carers; data capturers and support staff working at a facility or in a community-based settings).
- Individuals aspiring to be HIV counsellors and testers.
- Programme managers.
- Staff responsible for supervision of primary healthcare facilities and outreach teams.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing the course, you will be able to:

- Describe HIV Testing Services.
- Explain HIV testing technologies.
- Explain how to determine HIV status following the national algorithm.
- Explain how to prevent infections at the HIV rapid testing site.
- Explain how the quality of HIV rapid testing is assured at the test site.
- Explain the importance of quality control for HIV rapid testing.
- Describe external quality assessment.
- Demonstrate the ability to provide pre-test counselling.
- Demonstrate the ability to perform HIV rapid testing following the serial algorithm.
- Demonstrate the ability to provide post-test counselling.
- Explain the role documents and records play in the quality system and monitoring of programmes.
- Explain supply chain management at the HIV rapid testing site.
- Describe monitoring and evaluation.
- Explain ethical practice in a counselling context.

COURSE CONTENT

The key themes/topics that the course will cover:

- Introduction to HIV and AIDS.
- Prevention of HIV and AIDS.
- HIV Testing Services.
- HIV testing technologies.
- Safety at HIV rapid testing site.
- Quality assurance for HIV testing.
- Quality control.
- External quality assurance.
- Managing stocks at the HIV rapid testing site.
- Sexually Transmitted Infections.
- Antiretroviral Therapy.
- Counselling an individual in a structured environment.
- Pre- and post-test counselling.
- Performing HIV rapid tests.
- Documents and records.
- Prevention of mother-to-child transmission of Communicable Infections.
- Stigma and discrimination.
- Prevention and management of Opportunistic Infections.
- Nutrition and HIV.
- Professional ethics.
- Needs of individuals infected or affected by HIV.
- Monitoring and evaluation.
- Ongoing counselling.

ADMISSION

Any equivalent qualification on NQF level 4 (matric certificate) with relevant practical experience.

TRAINING DELIVERY

The course will be delivered through e-Learning or blended learning and contact at the worksite.

REQUIREMENTS

Students must have access to a computer and the internet.

DURATION

The duration of the course is:

- Ten days theory (Non-professionals)
- Five days theory (Professionals nurses)
- Work-based learning (Ten counselling sessions and ten rapid tests conducted.)

ASSESSMENTS

Summative theoretical test and a Portfolio of Evidence.

AWARD

A Health Systems Trust Certificate of Completion will be given to students who complete the short course.

FEES

The course fees vary, based on the number of enrolments by an organisation for the short course. A quotation per student will be given by the Course Co-ordinator, Cassius Semaushu at Cassius.Semaushu@hst.org.za. Course fees must be paid in full prior to the course start date.