Unit 4

HIV Vaccine Basics

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| Overview  In this unit, trainees will learn about HIV, HIV vaccines, research, and clinical trials. Before information on these topics is presented and distributed, the trainees will be asked to sit in front of their peers and practice speaking about one of these topics. The purpose of putting the trainees on the spot early on is to expose them to the challenges of delivering clear and consistent messages about complex topics surrounding HIV vaccine research.  Objectives  By the end of the unit trainees will:   * Have a greater understanding of HIV and HIV vaccine research * Recognize the potential for the educators’ own words to become a source of misinformation. * Be able to deliver clear and consistent messages about HIV, HIV vaccines, and clinical trials   Materials   * *Introduction to HIV Vaccines.ppt- 1 copy per trainee* * *Flip chart paper and markers*   Approximate time  2 hours, 30 minutes |

# Warm-up/Introduction (50 minutes)

## Trainer notes

The goal of this exercise is for trainees to better understand that what they say in public could be taken as a definitive answer and that if they are not prepared and intentional about what they say, they could create distrust and confusion in the community.

## Preparation: The “Hot Seat”

You will act as the facilitator or as the community group’s contact person who has invited the “expert” to respond to questions from a community group. You will ask the group to role-play a community that has little knowledge of research and HIV vaccines.

## Procedure

**Step 1:** Ask for a volunteer to come forward to be the “expert” on HIV vaccines and research.

**Step 2:** Explain that the volunteer is an expert who has come to speak with the community about HIV vaccines, the HVTN, and research in general. Your introduction of the volunteer should emphasize that the person is an authority, demonstrating that when they go out into the community working with the HVTN they will automatically be seen as an expert, and therefore thought to have all the answers.



**Key terms**

(To work on or avoid)

* It is a cure
* “The” or “this” vaccine…
* It is safe…
* If you become HIV infected, you will be eliminated from the trial.

**Step 3:** As the volunteer responds to the questions from the group, take notes on a flipchart entitled ***Key Terms (to work on or avoid)***. Write down words and phrases spoken that could be misunderstood or used to further encourage the spread of misinformation in the community. If the group initially struggles to come up with a mix of different questions, the trainer could interject and ask the invited “expert” a few questions.

Some common misuses of terms that could arise include the following: (see chart at right)

Step 4: Allow each person to come forward and be the “expert” for about 5 minutes. Encourage the group to diversify their questions so as not to repeat the same type of questions too often.

# Presentation of Information (1 hour)

## Preparation

* *Introduction to HIV Vaccines.ppt*

## Procedure

**Step 1:** Distribute a photocopy of the presentation to each trainee so that they can follow along and take notes as needed.

**Step 2:** Go through the presentation slowly, using the scripted version. Because vaccine science and research may be new to participants, it may be useful to think of new creative ways to explain some of the scientific terms. Try to use culturally or regionally appropriate examples and metaphors to explain these terms and concepts.

Remind the group that they should not hesitate to ask questions at any point during the presentation.

**Step 3:** After the presentation is made, ask the group if there are any final questions about the presentations. If a question is asked that could be answered in another part of your workshop, or if you are unsure of the answer, note the question on the Parking Lot sheet so that it can be addressed at a later time.

# Group work (30 minutes)

## Trainer notes

In this activity, trainees will apply the information that they learned in the vaccine presentation to how they talk about HIV vaccine research with the goal of developing consistent and accurate messages.

## Procedure

**Step 1:** Ask trainees “*How can you make sure that you all answer questions correctly in the community in a way that does not lead to misconceptions about HIV, HIV vaccines and research?”*



**Ways to generate consistent messages:**

**Step 2:** Try to get the group to come to the idea of consistent messages then write ***Ways to generate consistent messages*** on the top of a fresh flipchart page. Encourage brainstorming related to how they as a team can continue to develop and maintain accurate and consistent messages.

Some possible ideas include:

• Learning more about the HVTN, HIV vaccines, research, etc.

• Learning how to speak about different topics and ideas

• Making sure that everyone at the site understands and is able to communicate correct information.

• Creating a list of consistent messages that work in your community

• Checking in with peers at other sites to see how they answer this question or speak about the particular issue.

**Step 3:** Have everyone look at the ***Key Terms*** that were misused by the group in the “Hot Seat” exercise. Go through each term and have someone explain why and how the term was misused. If the term is not explained correctly, make sure that you and the group will work together to clearly explain the misuse. When possible, make reference to previous presentations and accompanying note-taking sheets.

**Step 4:** When the group has collectively understood the proper use of a term, ask a volunteer to summarize and give a final brief and clear explanation. Write this final explanation on a flip-chart entitled ***Key Terms (Correct Use).***



**Key Terms**

(Correct use!)

**Step 5:** Ask the group if this final explanation is one they can all agree on. If not, modify the explanation until they are all in agreement. Move on to the next misused key term and continue until the group works through all terms.

If there are too many terms, for the sake of time write on the Parking Lot sheet, ***Create a list of Consistent Messages***. Then, remind the group that many of the exercises performed in this training are designed to model how they can work as a team to create ideas, brainstorm and find solutions collectively.

# Wrap Up Activities (10 minutes)

## Procedure

**Step 1:** Ask the group how prepared they feel to begin speaking about HIV vaccines in their community. On a scale from 1 (not ready at all) to 10 (very ready and confident), where are they? Go around the room and gauge the level of readiness of the group.

**Step 2:** State that throughout their trainings the group will work hard to learn as much as possible, to practice these skills and to work as a team to feel prepared. The goal of the “Hot Seat” exercise was to give everyone an understanding of what it feels like to speak about HIV vaccines to a group, and to help each person determine where they are now and where they need to go with their own learning.

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| Additional resources   * https://www.iavi.org/phocadownload/IAVI\_VaxLit%20User%20Guide.pdf * Understanding HIV vaccines: <https://www.fredhutch.org/en/research/divisions/vaccine-infectious-disease-division/research/immunology-and-vaccine-development/be-the-generation/vaccines.html> * Global Advocacy for HIV Prevention (AVAC): fact sheets, key messages and advocacy resources: <https://www.avac.org/vaccines/basics> |

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