

'FEEL FREE TO ASK!'

Overview

This exercise is for your whole team – including (especially!) the reception team and your health care assistants. It will take around an hour, and you will need to lead it and organise them!

Participants are divided into teams. Each team is given one of 4 patient roles (*Geoffrey, Marie, Jayden* and *Iryna*) and asked to think about the questions and concerns raised in that scenario. Teams will be asked to feedback their thoughts at the end of the session, and to devise an action plan on how to implement any changes discussed within the team.

Stage 1

Minutes 0-10: Mini HIV- update given by you:

- explain to your team that treatments for HIV are highly effective these days.
- explain that the most dangerous HIV is undiagnosed HIV because the disease can progress and become severe without the patient being aware.
- explain that people with HIV do much better if diagnosed early

Invite questions.

Stage 2

Minutes 10 – 40:

- Divide your team into four groups, with a mixture of staff roles in each. If these groups will number over 4 people then divide into eight groups instead, as small numbers are better.
- Give each group a slip of paper with one of these four 'patient roles'.
- If you have eight groups each 'patient roles' will be given out twice.
- Encourage the teams to find their own base in the practice but also to wander around to check things.

Geoffrey, a 36 year old lawyer registered with your practice.

- You would like an HIV test but are a bit worried about **confidentiality** in your practice (in ANY practice).
- You would like to know who in your practice would see the result – you don't want the information to spread too far.

As a group: look for information on confidentiality in your practice that might reassure Geoffrey.

You might want to look at the **practice website and leaflet.**

Look around your **reception area** for relevant posters, leaflets or other media.

Consider the information that patients see in the **consulting rooms.**

Does your practice have a **confidentiality policy**? Do you know where it is and what it says?

When it was last reviewed? Would Geoffrey know it exists?

Review your findings and make a plan of action if there are ideas to be implemented.

Agree who will see this through, and when it will be completed.

Agree a date for review.

Be ready to give brief feedback to the group on what you found and what you plan

Plan of action:

Lead:

Review date:

Marie

, a 47 year old woman

- You found out recently that your husband uses prostitutes, including when he has been overseas. You have had a very distressing time that you have not shared with anyone else at all. You are very worried about AIDS and whether you might get it and die.
- You cannot imagine how your friends or family would react if you had it.
- You can't even imagine how the nurses and doctors would react if you asked for a test – you, a middle aged married woman.
- You are attending the practice, waiting for a prescription for your husband.

As a group: look for information on HIV testing that might help Marie realise that HIV testing is available at the practice, and help encourage her to ask for a test.

You might want to look at the **practice website and leaflet.**

Look around your **reception area** for relevant posters, leaflets or other media.

Consider the information that patients see in the **consulting rooms.**

Would Marie be able to ask for information on HIV in your practice? What would help?

Review your findings and make a plan of action if there are ideas to be implemented.

Agree who will see this through, and when it will be completed.

Agree a date for review.

Be ready to give brief feedback to the group on what you found and what you plan

Plan of action:

Lead:

Review date:

Jayden, a 23 year old shop assistant

- You are gay. Your parents moved here from Jamaica and they don't know you are gay. You think they, and your community in general, is very homophobic. In fact you think this whole area is homophobic and you can't wait to move on.
- You would like an HIV test because it has been niggling in your mind that a condom split when you were having sex with a guy you met briefly a couple of years ago. You usually have safe sex.
- You have always meant to have a test but have not got round to it and you don't like the idea of going to a sexual health clinic and getting asked a million things. But going to your local practice.....how can you ask for an HIV test without making it obvious you are gay? You really don't want to be sneered or snickered at by any of the staff thanks very much!

As a group: look for information on HIV testing that might help Jayden realise that HIV testing is available at the practice. Is there anything that might reassure Jayden that the practice team will not be judgmental?

You might want to look at the **practice website and leaflet**.

Look around your **reception area** for relevant posters, leaflets or other media.

Consider the information that patients see in the **consulting rooms**.

Would Jayden be able to ask for information on HIV in your practice? What would help?

Review your findings and make a plan of action if there are ideas to be implemented.

Agree who will see this through, and when it will be completed.

Agree a date for review.

Be ready to give brief feedback to the group on what you found and what you plan

Plan of action:

Lead:

Review date:

Iryna, a 31 year old working in a coffee shop

- You are Ukrainian who has been in the UK for 5 years. In your early 20s you injected drugs for a while. You have now got yourself out of that mess but you are aware that rates of HIV in the Ukraine are relatively high.
- You have always meant to have a test.
- You were on the brink of asking for a test at the practice - but someone has told you that one of the receptionists is Ukrainian, although you have never come across her. The idea of anyone in your community finding out about your past drug problem or your HIV test is too terrible!

As a group: look for information on confidentiality in your practice that might reassure Iryna

Also look for information that spells out the benefits of HIV testing

You might want to look at the **practice website and leaflet.**

Look around your **reception area** for relevant posters, leaflets or other media.

Consider the information that patients see in the **consulting rooms.**

Which other countries have a high prevalence of HIV? Are people from any of these countries particularly well represented in your practice population? Is there any information targeted at them?

Review your findings and make a plan of action if there are ideas to be implemented.

Agree who will see this through, and when it will be completed.

Agree a date for review.

Be ready to give brief feedback to the group on what you found and what you plan

Plan of action:

Lead:

Review date:

Stage 3

Minutes 40 to 55: Feedback

Gather your team back – give them each two or three minutes to feed back on their main findings.

If two groups were considering the same patient they should feed back together.

[Use a timer and make this a game if you have a garrulous team]

For your own reflection, here are some other examples of feedback for the **'Feel Free to Ask'** game:

'We agreed that it is really easy to ask a member of staff for a leaflet on asthma or even contraception but for HIV – or other stigmatised topics - the information has to be much more readily available and visible.'

'We felt that small posters in the consulting rooms, ideally easy for both patient and the doctor (or nurse) to see, might be a helpful in raising the subject of an HIV test - for both patient and clinician.'

'We felt we shouldn't just make it clear that HIV tests were available from our GPs and nurses. We also felt that we wanted to highlight the health benefits of testing. So we added a slide in the waiting room health information projection'.

'Most of us were a bit unsure what our confidentiality policy says – we don't seem to have discussed it for ages. So we are planning a review of it and will update the team on the contents. We are also adding it into the induction of new staff.'

Is any of this relevant to your own practice? If so, you could contribute some of these ideas to the discussion if they don't come up

Stage 4

Minutes 55-60: Summary

Agree how to take the plans of action forward

Point out that if doctors and nurses regularly offer HIV tests – normalise them – it makes it much easier for our worried patients