

# MEDICATION ADHERENCE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH: AN EXAMPLE FROM LOW INCOME, URBAN YOUNG ADULTS LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS

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## Introduction

- ❖ Consistent medication adherence by study participants in clinical trials is essential for producing valid and reliable safety and efficacy data.
- ❖ Understanding the beliefs, motivations and experiences underlying medication adherence in the study population can assist Clinical Research Professionals (CRPs) in predicting participant adherence potential while also supporting adherence during clinical trials.

## Purpose of Presentation

- ❖ To present a method that can be used by CRPs to become familiar with the medication adherence patterns of their study populations and develop interventions.
- ❖ To provide an example of how this method was used to capture the HIV medication adherence challenges experienced by low income, urban young adults living with HIV/AIDS and develop interventions.

## Interview Methodology

- ❖ Based on a qualitative research design (Patton, 2015)
- ❖ Short, semi-structured interviews
- ❖ 16 low income, urban young adults living with HIV/AIDS
- ❖ Rich, descriptive narrative data
- ❖ Analyzed for themes, patterns, & significant meanings
- ❖ Part of a larger research study (Thoma, 2015)

## Interview Excerpts: Challenges to Medication Adherence

“The hardest part for me is taking it for life. The doctor who actually told me that I had to get on the medication said I should take this as an advantage. She doesn’t understand. For life?? You have to take this medication for the rest of your life??”

Possible intervention ideas for CRPs (Costa et al., 2015)

- Consult with an experienced pharmacist or nurse
- Since this is a motivational issue, use a behavioral intervention method such as motivational interviewing
- Use an educational intervention method such as a risk perception discussion.

“At the beginning, it was a lot of struggles to take them but then I forget to take them and I missed a couple of days so I automatically stopped taking them.”

Possible intervention ideas for CRPs

- Use some self-management and reminder methods such as pill boxes, cell phone reminder applications and alerts, text messaging and phone reminders from the clinic, etc.
- Find out more information from the patient about the different struggles s/he was experiencing to inform your choice of intervention.



## Implications for Clinical Research Professionals

- ❖ Collecting rich, descriptive information about the study population’s medication adherence experiences can assist CRPs with predicting participant adherence potential and supporting adherence during clinical trials.
  - ❖ Ask open-ended questions about medication adherence during the recruitment process; ask follow-up questions throughout the trial.
  - ❖ Conduct short, semi-structured interviews about medication adherence with a small sample of the study population.
  - ❖ Review the results of qualitative studies about the study population’s medication adherence experiences in the scholarly literature if available.
  - ❖ Use this information to guide your intervention choices.
- ❖ Builds trust and rapport between CRPs and study participants.
- ❖ Improves empathy and understanding by CRPs of the study population.
- ❖ Enhances patient engagement and patient centricity.

