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Assessment of Adherence to HAART: Results of Medical Chart Audits and Anonymous Social Surveys of Patients at the St. Petersburg City AIDS Center

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BACKGROUND

Large scale ART administration began in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 2006. By 2011, ART was being administered to 5,433 patients. According to official data, 806 (15%) of these individuals discontinued treatment and 339 (42%) died. Annual trends indicate numbers of new ART patients and those who discontinue therapy are increasing.

METHODS

Through a project of the American International Health Alliance's HIV/AIDS Twinning Center supported by the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) in Russia, chart audits were conducted to assess service quality at the St. Petersburg AIDS Center between April 2010 and March 2011.

Out of 18,160 registered patients, a group of 8,172 (45%) were under active care. A total of 369 charts were randomly selected and assessed using a standardized questionnaire; 134 (36%) of these were ART patients.

A self-evaluation survey that used a subset of respondents selected from all adult HAART patients who visited the Center during an 8-week period was also conducted. Of the 3,350 ART patients at that time, 349 patients completed this anonymous questionnaire.

RESULTS

As indicated in Table 1, the chart audit showed CD4 count improvement in an average of 54% of patients surveyed and reduction of viral load down to undetectable levels in an average of 62% of patients.

The self-evaluation revealed that an average of 49% of all patients reported being compliant to ART, with a high of 56% during the second 6-month period of treatment and an average decrease of 12% during the second year on ART (see Tables 2, 3). According to official AIDS Center data for the time of the study, 81% of the 3,350 patients were reported as adherent to their ART regimens.

CONCLUSIONS

The data from the medical chart audit correlate well with patient self-evaluation findings yet deviate dramatically from official ART adherence statistics. Efforts to build sustainable commitment to therapy and establish an effective monitoring and evaluation system are needed. The medical chart audits and patient self-assessment findings indicate that adherence habits developed during the first year of ART decline during subsequent years. Multidisciplinary care teams must strengthen adherence efforts to prevent noncompliance.

Table 1: Parameters of ART Adherence in Adults: Medical Chart Audit and Patient Satisfaction Survey Results

Adult ART Patients	1-6 Months	6-12 Months	1-2 Years	>2 Years
Medical Chart Audit	n=28	n=24	n=23	n=44
Improvement of CD4	64% (18)	50% (12)	52% (13)	50% (22)
VL reduction or stably undetermined (50 copies/ml)	68% (19)	75% (18)	52% (12)	55% (22)
Patient Self Assessment Survey	n=70	n=54	n=61	n=143
I am very compliant to ART	54% (38)	56% (30)	41% (25)	45% (65)
I always take my medication on time	59% (41)	67% (36)	49% (30)	47% (67)
I missed ≥ 4 doses in the previous month	6% (4)	4% (2)	5% (3)	5% (7)

Graph 1: Parameters of ART Adherence in Adults: Medical Chart Audit and Patient Satisfaction Survey Results

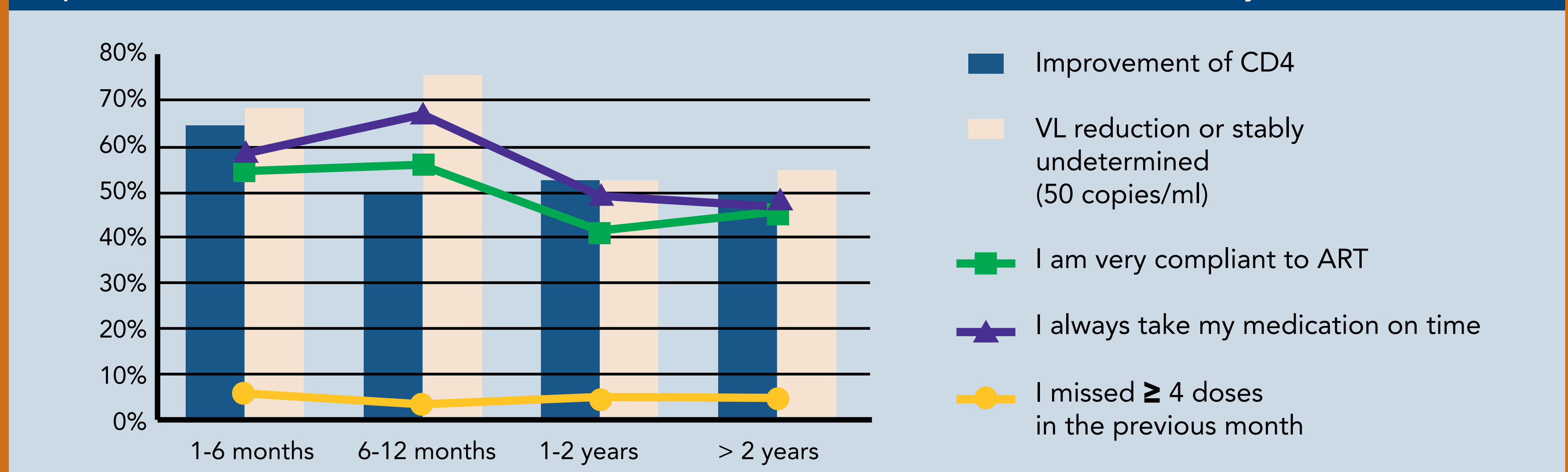


Table 2: Parameters of ART Adherence in Adult Males: Medical Chart Audit and Patient Satisfaction Survey Results

Adult Male ART Patients	1-6 Months	6-12 Months	1-2 Years	>2 Years
Medical Chart Audit	n=18	n=13	n=11	n=22
Improvement of CD4	50% (9)	62% (8)	64% (7)	50% (11)
VL reduction or stably undetermined (50 copies/ml)	67% (12)	77% (10)	45% (5)	50% (11)
Patient Self Assessment Survey	n=28	n=17	n=23	n=54
I am very compliant to ART	39% (11)	53% (9)	48% (11)	39% (11)
I always take my medication on time	36% (10)	59% (10)	43% (10)	52% (28)
I missed ≥ 4 doses in the previous month	4% (4)	0% (0)	4% (1)	4% (2)

Table 3: Parameters of ART Adherence in Adult Females: Medical Chart Audit and Patient Satisfaction Survey Results

Adult Female ART Patients	1-6 Months	6-12 Months	1-2 Years	>2 Years
Medical Chart Audit	n=10	n=11	n=12	n=22
Improvement of CD4	90% (9)	36% (4)	42% (5)	50% (11)
VL reduction or stably undetermined (50 copies/ml)	70% (7)	73% (8)	58% (7)	59% (13)
Patient Self Assessment Survey	n=42	n=37	n=38	n=89
I am very compliant to ART	64% (27)	57% (21)	37% (14)	49% (44)
I always take my medication on time	74% (31)	70% (26)	53% (20)	44% (39)
I missed ≥ 4 doses in the previous month	0% (0)	5% (2)	5% (2)	6% (5)

