



Improving Health Outcomes through Pharmacy Health Literacy Initiatives in an HIV/AIDS Population



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Introduction

AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) is global non-profit organization providing cutting-edge medicine and advocacy to over 150,000 people in more than 25 countries. The operating capital comes primarily from our 21 pharmacies throughout Florida, California and Washington D.C., creating a truly independent voice in our mission to rid the world of HIV/AIDS. At AHF Pharmacy, we integrate evidence based clinical pharmacy services into the care and management of high-risk, high cost, complex disease state patients.

Objective

The AHF Pharmacy Team developed an Adherence Program to improve health outcomes in our HIV/AIDS population. The AHF Adherence Program was designed to simplify drug regimens by prepackaging maintenance medications and provide tools for low health literacy patients. In clinical practice associated with HIV/AIDS patients, non-adherence results from multiple factors and has serious consequences. Patient compliance to their medication regimen can be difficult due to progression of the disease, complicated medication regimens, low health literacy, and frequent adverse drug events.

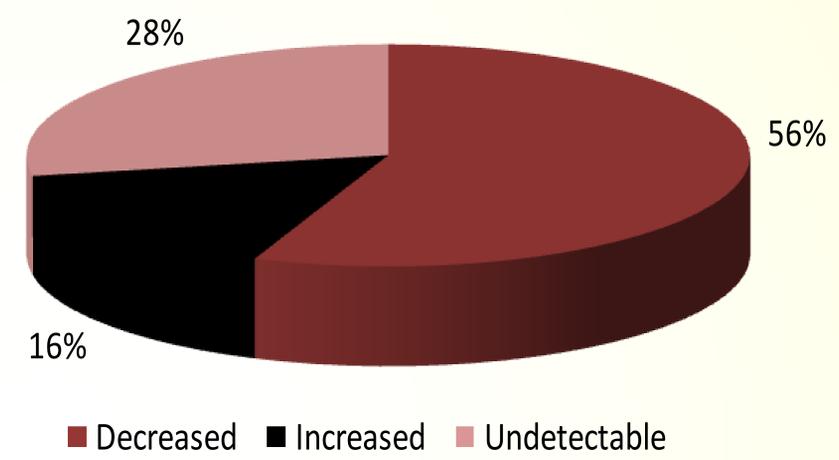
Methods

The AHF Pharmacy Team participated in the HRSA Patient Safety & Clinical Pharmacy Services Collaborative. It's purpose is to evaluate the impact that clinical pharmacy services has on improving patient safety and clinical outcomes in high risk patients. A group of high risk HIV patients prescribed a HAART regimen, with compliance and health literacy issues, were enrolled in the AHF Adherence Program. The patient's CD4 and Viral Load values were collected prior to enrollment in the program and after 9 to 12 months of participation.

Adherence Program Highlights

- Fit Your Life Model
- Medication Therapy Management Consultation
- Medication Refill Chart
- Medication Cycle Fill
- Monthly Patient Contact
- One Complete Medication List
- Adherence Guide
- Adherence Packaging of Maintenance Medication
- Time of day stickers and labels
- Packaging reflecting Calendar days
- Time of day packaging (ensure consistent dosing, special dosing, current medications)
- Visual Impairment Clues (notches, bubbles, foil backing, vial/packaged medications)
- Disease Management Nurse Contact
- Medication Reconciliation
- Patient/Adherence Team Meetings

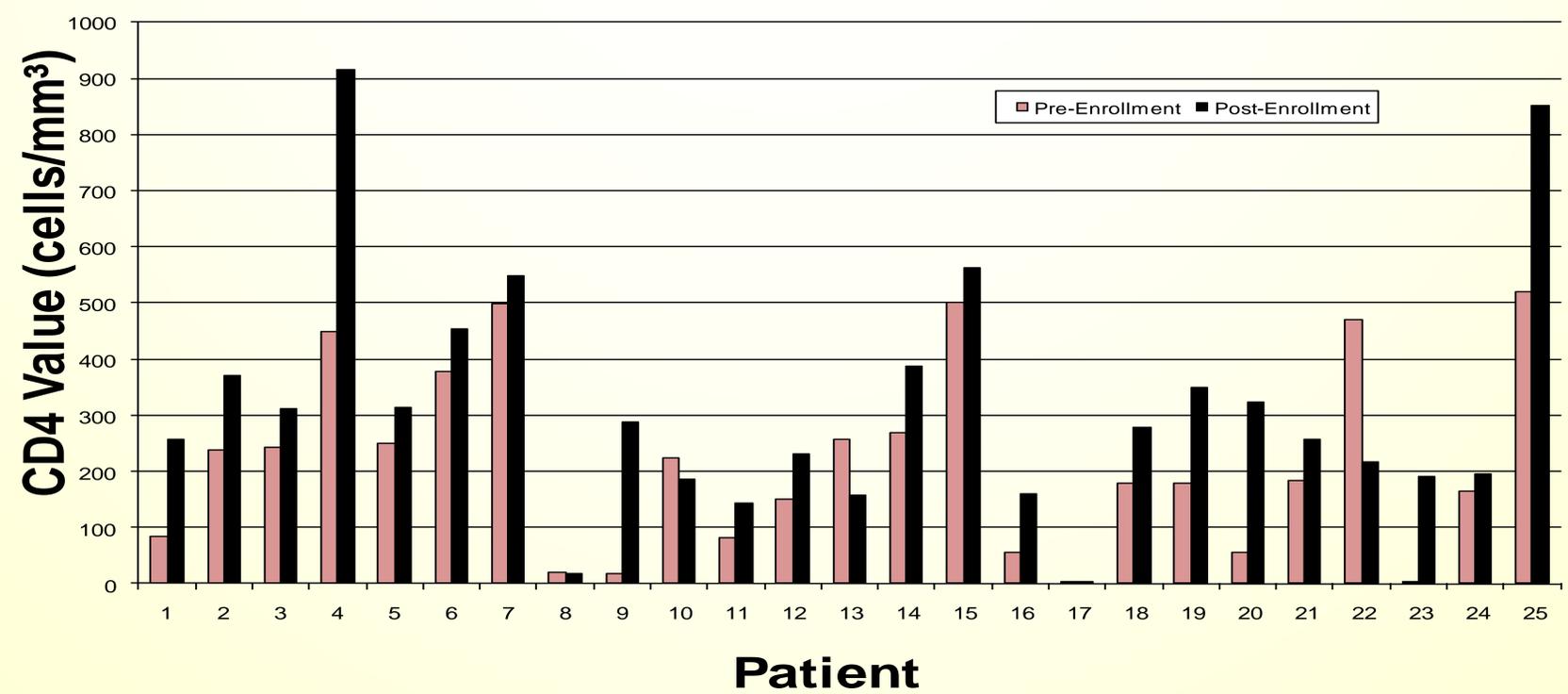
Change in Viral Load



Discussion

The AHF Adherence Program initiated many pharmacy health literacy tools in our high risk, complex disease state HIV/AIDS patients. During development of the Adherence Program, we gained insight from the participants and designed ways to improve medication adherence. We identified health literacy and pharmacy health literacy as common problems in our population. The HRSA-sponsored PSPC Collaborative participation and the AHRQ Pharmacy Health Literacy information guided our team to design innovative ways to help our patients. We continue to search for ways to improve health outcomes in our HIV/AIDS population.

Change in CD4



Conclusion

Our team enrolled 24 patients in the AHF Adherence Program and had a general improvement in adherence and health outcome as indicated by an increase in CD4+ and a decrease in Viral Load. Of the 24 patients, 84% had an increase in their CD4+ count above baseline, and 84% had a decrease in viral load from baseline or their viral load remained undetectable.

Acknowledgements

- Patient Safety and Clinical Pharmacy Services Collaborative
<http://www.hrsgov/publichealth/clinical/patientsafety/index.html>
- AHRQ Pharmacy Health Literacy
<http://www.ahrq.gov/pharmhealthlit/>