THE PRECLERKSHIP HIV ELECTIVE: CONTINUING TO ADDRESS GAPS IN HEALTH CARE EDUCATION OF MEDICAL STUDENTS

Zenita Alidina, Rebecca Hicks, Madiha Naseem, Lina Roa, Nirojini Sivachandran, Hunter (Linyuan) Wang

Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- Funded by OHTN
ABOUT THE ELECTIVE

- Founded by medical students in 2008-2009
- Student-run elective which provides second-year medical students with the opportunity to learn more about people living with HIV/AIDS (PHAs)
- **GOAL:** respond to the need for better medical education in the field of HIV by introducing students to the multidisciplinary aspects of HIV care and the spectrum of determinants of health affecting people living with HIV in Canada and globally
BACKGROUND

- In developed nations, HIV infection has become a chronic illness due to advancement in medical treatment that has successfully reduced HIV mortality.

- Physicians no longer monitor/treat a single illness but they manage a complex spectrum of co-morbidities along with a variety of social challenges.

Training in HIV care, however, is often inadequate.
BACKGROUND

- Curtis et al. (1994): residents and physicians lack proper identification of HIV risk behaviours

- Beckwith et al. (2003): most medical students do not receive training in HIV testing but believe that it should be a part of the curriculum

- The National Aids Trust in the UK reports that 50% of early-stage HIV infections are being missed by physicians (BBC News, 2008)

- Estcourt et al. (2009): less than 45% of medical students felt that they could conduct an appropriate HIV pre-test discussion and less than 60% could recognize clinical indicators of HIV
Development of the elective

- 2008
- 2009
- 2010
- 2011
- 2012
**Elective Overview: Seminars**

- **40 students**
- **5-6 interactive seminars on biomedical, psychosocial, and global HIV topics**
- **Goal:** knowledge
Elective Overview: Physician Observerships

- Mandatory half-day observerships with clinical preceptors involved in HIV care.
- **Goal:** career opportunities

- HIV Primary Care Physicians
- Infectious Diseases Specialists
- Pregnancy and HIV
- HIV co-infections
ELECTIVE OVERVIEW: COMMUNITY AGENCIES

- Students matched to a community agency providing services for PHAs
- Minimum of one half-day learning about the agency’s services and mandate
- **Goal:** non-medical aspects of HIV
Elective Overview: Buddy Program

- Organized in partnership with the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation (PWA)
- Two dinners hosted with PWA
- Medical students are paired with a PWA client to talk about their lived experience

**Goal:** Develop a deeper understanding of the challenges of living with HIV/AIDS
**Time distribution**

- **6 hours** for Seminars
- **3 hours** each for Agencies Visits, Buddy Program, and Physician Observerships
PROGRAM EVALUATION

- Chew et al. 2012
- Positive feedback

- Self-assessment prior to starting and after PHE completion,
- Significant increase in HIV knowledge from 78.1% to 90.2%

Elective as a Model

- HIV electives now running in Universities of Ottawa and Alberta

Increase in Enrolment

- 2008: 18 medical students
- 2012: 40 medical students
- First year students serving as junior co-ordinators

HIV Knowledge Improvement

- Positive feedback

Chew et al. 2012
FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Case studies in seminars

HIV clinical handbooks

Collaborating with other electives

Opening to first year students

Collaboration for HIV Medical Education (CHIME)
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THANK YOU