

# **CLEAR Facilitator's Manual**

## **Module 3**

### **Stay Well: Self-care/ Health-care Behaviors**

#### **Session #14: Attending Health Care Appointments (1.5 hrs.)**

##### OBJECTIVES:

1. Participant will increase his/her motivation to attend medical appointments.
2. Participant will change attitudes that interfere with attending health care appointments.
3. Participant will identify and problem-solve barriers to keeping appointments.
4. Participant will continue to develop substance use management skills.

##### RATIONALE:

While keeping health appointments seems an obvious necessity in order to receive care, many people do not keep them. Some of the reasons relate to the meaning that keeping the appointment implies – “I am sick;” or patients may fear what news will be given to them at the appointment. In other cases, patients may feel intimidated by health care personnel.

This session tries to remove the attitudinal and skill deficit barriers that might prevent HIV-positive youth from attending health care appointments and accessing care. Problem solving is initiated and modeled, and further practice is encouraged. Attempts are made to increase motivation by developing a list of pros and cons and by relating attending appointments to the higher self-concept.

## SUMMARY:

1. Welcome the participant. Review between session goals. Give thank you gift. (20 minutes)
2. Introduce the topic of attending appointments and relate it to feelings. (15 minutes)
3. Make a list of pros and cons for attending appointments and ask the participant if he/she is the kind of person who attends appointments. (10 minutes)
4. Work on changing negative attitudes toward appointments and health care through responding to stimulus statements. (15 minutes)
5. Identify barriers and problem-solve them. (15 minutes)
6. End with between-session goals, benefit awareness, and showing benefit and appreciation. (15 minutes)

## MATERIALS:

Attendance/ Participation Record  
Thank you gift  
Goal Summary Sheet  
Tape Recorder  
90-min Audio Tape  
Facilitator's Manual  
Participant's Workbook  
Participant Data Binder  
Pens and Notepads

## NOTES TO THE FACILITATORS:

Text in **bold** letters tells you what the purpose of each exercise is. Text in CAPITAL letters tells you what to do. Text in small letters tells you what to say. Once you become familiar with what to say, please put it in your own words. Do not read text in small letters verbatim; make it natural.

The times listed under the headings of each exercise are to help you keep on target and move the workshop along. Exercises may be lengthened or shortened as needed as long as all material is covered.

Exercise 1: "How am I doing?"  
(20 minutes)

**[The purposes of this exercise are to engage the youth, to increase self-esteem, and to shape positive behaviors. A review of drug and alcohol-free days, a review of actions taken to motivate health care behavior compliance and a thank you gift are the approaches taken.]**

Welcome back! I'm glad you could join me today. I miss you when you're not here.

Let's start off by reviewing progress on this past week's goals.

You recorded your goal on the goal log last week.

Remind me what your goal was and how you did.

REFER TO LAST WEEK'S GOAL SUMMARY SHEET AS NEEDED.

ENDORSE PROGRESS WITH VERBAL PRAISE.

PROBLEM-SOLVE BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES.

By the way, did you remember to cross substance-free days off on your Drug and Alcohol Calendar?

You probably noticed that if you used any substances during the week, it is much easier to recall if you have been X-ing off the substance-free days on your Calendar on a daily basis.

Please don't forget about this important tool. Next time we will check with you to see if you used your Calendar all this coming week.

Thanks for sharing your week. That was great.

Today we are continuing to look at staying on track with your medical care.

Going to your appointments and making the best of your time with your doctor is vital to long-term wellness.

But before we get to work on today's topics let me give you a thank you gift.

**GIVE YOUTH THANK YOU GIFT.**

There are only three sessions left, so I really hope you can make them all.

Session 2: What Is This Session About?  
(15 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to introduce the topic and to evoke feelings related to attending medical appointments and to reify the issues involved. A script, stimulus statements, and the Feeling Thermometer are the tools used.]**

Okay, to get into today's topic let's act out a soap scene.

Here is the script. You can put it in your workbook.

Would you like to be Randy [or Rhonda] or John [or Jessica]?

DECIDE WHO WILL PLAY EACH PART.

READ THE SCENE.

MISSING APPOINTMENTS

RANDY/RHONDA: Are you John/Jessica?

JOHN/JESSICA: Yes.

R: I'm Randy/Rhonda from the Clinic.

J: What clinic?

R: Where you are *supposed* to be coming for treatment. You went there a couple of months ago.

J: Oh, yeah. I remember.

R: You need to be keeping track of your viral load and t-cell counts.

J: So?

R: So you haven't been coming. We keep sending you appointment cards and calling you and you don't show.

J: I forget.

R: If we went back to the clinic right now, I'm sure I could get you in for a check-up.

J: I can't do it now.

R: I'll go with you.

J: Thanks but I'm supposed to meet a friend now. In fact, I'm late.

R: Look, John/Jessica, this is really important. I'm HIV positive too. I volunteer some of my time to help find people who don't come in regularly. You got to watch out for your health.

J: Not now. Thanks for coming by, but not now.

R: What's the problem?

THE END

What do you think the problem was?

Why didn't Jessica/John want to go?

ENCOURAGE SHARING IDEAS OF WHY JESSICA/ JOHN MIGHT NOT HAVE WANTED TO KEEP HER/HIS APPOINTMENTS.

Those were some good ideas.

As you can guess, today we are working on keeping health care appointments.

I wonder how you feel about keeping appointments.

Let's take a look at a familiar tool to help us out with this one.

Remember the Feeling Thermometer?

100 degrees means you are very uncomfortable, and 0 degrees means you are completely comfortable.

Let's get some temperature readings for some situations involving a medical appointment.

Here is a page with some statements on it. You can put it in your workbook.

#### GIVE YOUTH MEDICAL APPOINTMENT SITUATIONS.

I'll read a statement and then ask you to say how you feel about it by giving me your temperature reading.

READ THE SITUATIONS AND ASK PARTICIPANT TO RESPOND TO THAT STATEMENT.

VALIDATE READINGS WITH REFLECTIVE STATEMENTS.

#### MEDICAL APPOINTMENT SITUATIONS

1. You sit in the waiting room at the clinic for an hour before your name is called.
2. The doctor keeps on you and on you to take better care of yourself.
3. You look around in the waiting room at the clinic and see a lot of really sick looking people.
4. You see some of your friends making fun of someone who is sick.

Thanks for participating. That was great!

Those situations were to get us started.

What are some tough situations you have faced about keeping appointments and how did you feel in those situations?

ENCOURAGE SHARING OF SITUATIONS AND FEELINGS.

EXPLORE WHY THE YOUTH FELT AS THEY DID.

How you feel will make a big difference in terms of keeping appointments.

If you expect to feel terrible or are afraid, you are less likely to want to attend an appointment.

Exercise 3: Why Should I Care About Keeping Appointments?  
(10 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to increase motivation to attend health care appointments. Listing pros and cons and determining if keeping appointments is consistent with one's view of one's self are employed.]**

Keeping your medical appointments is an important area for us to deal with.

Many people with *all different kinds* of health problems do not follow what is prescribed for them and sometimes do not keep appointments.

This can be a problem.

Why would someone want to keep his or her medical appointments?

Why would someone else not?

To have us look at this question, let's make a list of the pros and cons to keeping medical appointments.

Here is a page for your workbook. It is a chart with two columns, "pros" and "cons."

Let's brainstorm together some of the pros and cons and if any of the pros or cons apply to you, you can write them down under the appropriate column.

Let's start with some pros for keeping medical appointments. What do you think?

ENCOURAGE YOUTHS LIST REASONS FIRST FOR, AND THEN AGAINST KEEPING THEIR APPOINTMENTS.

SUGGEST REASONS THAT MAY HAVE COME UP IN EARLIER SESSIONS. HAVE YOUTH RECORD THE REASONS THEY RELATE TO.

IF APPROPRIATE, SUGGEST ISSUES AROUND "KNOWING WHERE YOU STAND" AND "FEAR"

That's a good list of pros and cons.

Unless you have more pros than cons, you are not likely to make your appointments.

Also, we need to find out if keeping your appointments fits in with your view of yourself.

So to explore this, let's do this activity.

I am going to give you a statement, and I want you to tell me how much you agree with it.

Use the scale on this page to help you.

#### GIVE PARTICIPANT RATING SCALE.

On this scale, 1 means agree and 7 means disagree, and you could be anywhere in between.

Here is the statement: "I am the kind of person who usually keeps my medical appointments."

How much do you personally agree with that statement?

#### OBTAIN A RESPONSE.

Thanks for sharing that. I appreciate your honesty.

I'd like to examine this some more.

What are people like who keep their medical appointments?

What qualities do they have?

HAVE YOUTH LIST QUALITIES. REFLECT BACK THE QUALITIES.

Do you have the same qualities or are you different in some ways?

Tell me about it.

DISCUSS YOUTH'S SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN QUALITIES FOR KEEPING MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS.

DISCUSS WHY THE YOUTH FEELS LIKE THEY ARE SAME OR DIFFERENT THAN SOMEONE WHO KEEPS MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS.

Do the rest of you think that you will most likely keep your medical appointments?

DISCUSS HOW THE WAY IN WHICH A PERSON SEES HIM/HERSELF WILL INFLUENCE KEEPING APPOINTMENTS.

You can see that a lot of factors will influence whether you keep your medical appointments and go when you need to.

Only you can decide what you are going to do.

Do the pluses outweigh the minuses?

Is sticking with your drug and alcohol use goal worth it if you can do better at making your medical appointments and taking good care of your health?

Does taking care of yourself and attending your appointments fit expressing your higher self?

Answering these questions can help you figure out what to do.

Exercise 4: What Are My Attitudes About Medical Care?  
(15 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to create more positive attitudes toward receiving medical care. Having youths argue against negative attitudes is the approach used.]**

So let's begin to talk about it.

Many people have negative attitudes toward receiving medical care.

These attitudes may keep them from attending appointments and following treatment protocols.

You may have some of those attitudes.

Similar to what we've done with attitudes about substance use and safer sex, I would like you to practice arguing against some of those attitudes.

Here is the list of attitudes we will work with. You can put this page in your workbook.

**GIVE YOUTH LIST OF ATTITUDES ABOUT MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS.**

This time we will make the exercise a little more interesting.

I'll start off by reading the first attitude from the list.

Then you will argue against that attitude.

After you give a strong counter-argument to the attitude I read, you can pass the ball by reading an attitude to me, and then I will argue against the attitude you read from the list.

We both have to make a strong counter argument, nothing half-ass.

All set?

Okay, here is the first attitude:

READ EACH ATTITUDE FROM THE LIST BELOW, FOLLOWING THE ABOVE INSTRUCTIONS.

ENDORSE GOOD COUNTER-ATTITUDES AND AUGMENT WEAKER ONES.

SUGGESTIONS FOR COUNTER ARGUMENTS ARE GIVEN.

NEGATIVE MEDICAL CARE ATTITUDES

"IF I GO TO THE CLINIC, PEOPLE WILL KNOW I AM HIV+."

COUNTER: "MY TAKING CARE OF MYSELF IS WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT, I CAN GO TO A CLINIC WHERE NO ONE KNOWS ME"

"I DON'T THINK I'M REALLY SICK."

COUNTER: "THE ONLY WAY THAT I'M GOING TO STAY HEALTHY IS BY GOING TO THE DOCTOR AND GETTING CHECKED OUT"

"I HATE TAKING ORDERS FROM ANYBODY, ESPECIALLY DOCTORS."

COUNTER: "I'M NOT TAKING ORDERS FROM THE DOCTOR, I'M DOING WHAT'S BEST FOR ME"

"THERE IS NOTHING THEY CAN DO FOR ME ANYWAY."

COUNTER: "THERE REALLY IS NOTHING THAT CAN BE DONE FOR ME UNLESS I TRY. IF I GO, I GIVE MYSELF THE BEST CHANCE"

"I CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE THE TIME OFF FROM WORK."

COUNTER: "IF I DON'T TAKE CARE OF MYSELF, I'LL GET TO SICK TO WORK. I NEED TO DO THIS FOR ME"

"I NEVER TOOK GOOD CARE OF MYSELF BEFORE AND I'VE NEVER BEEN SICK."

COUNTER: "I DON'T WANT TO GET SICK SO I NEED TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF. I'VE ALREADY TAKEN SOME GOOD STEPS IN TAKING CARE OF MYSELF AND I CAN TAKE ANOTHER STEP"

"THE CLINIC IS IN A POOR LOCATION. THERE ARE TOO MANY DRUG DEALERS AROUND."

COUNTER: "I CAN FIND A CLINIC THAT IS SAFE FOR ME. I AM WORTH THE EFFORT"

That was fun. You did a great job!

I hope you will consider some of the positive attitudes about medical care that you heard today.

Now it's time to get some practice problem-solving some of the things that get in the way of attending medical appointments.

Exercise 5: Attending Medical Appointments:  
Breaking Down Barriers (15 minutes)

**[The purpose of this exercise is to improve problem-solving skills related to attending appointments. Identifying barriers and problem-solving are the methods employed.]**

To start off, we need to read a brief soap scene in which there is a problem.

We will use this scene as an example of how to apply problem solving to a barrier for keeping medical appointments.

Would you like to play Melissa [or Marvin] or Charlene [or Charles]?

DECIDE WHO WILL READ EACH PART.

The scene is called “I forgot” and here is the script.

READ THE SCRIPT:

I FORGOT!

MARVIN/MELLISA: I didn't see you at the clinic today.

CHARLES/CHARLENE: What do you mean?

M: Don't you remember? We both had appointments at 1:00 this afternoon.

C: Oh, No! I completely forgot. I'm sorry. I just lost it. I completely forgot. Until you said it just now, there was no recollection of any appointment.

M: What's wrong with you? You keep forgetting things.

C: Listen, ever since I found out I was positive that's all I think about. There's no room in my head for anything else. I'm all nerves. I set something down and can't remember where I put it.

M: Go to the clinic. You'll find out you are doing well. It will take the worry off your mind.

C: It will make it worse.

M: How do you figure?

C: I know what they are going to tell me.

M: What?

C: That I'm going to die in a couple of months. I don't want to hear that.

M: Who told you that?

C: Nobody. I can just feel it.

M: That's *not* what they are going to tell you. We got to figure out a way to get you in there.

C: I'm scared.

THE END

All right! I think we'll make you star yet.

Thank you!

Trying some problem solving would be useful here.

Turn to page the Problem-Solving model in your workbook.

### PROBLEM SOLVING MODEL

DEFINE THE PROBLEM

FIGURE OUT THE GOAL

LIST ACTIONS YOU MIGHT TAKE

DECIDE ON A COURSE OF ACTION

DO IT

## REVIEW IT

We have been over these steps many times before.

For this exercise we are going to focus on the first 4 steps.

FOCUS ON DEFINING THE PROBLEM, IDENTIFYING THE GOAL,  
GENERATING ALTERNATIVES, AND DISCUSSING WHICH  
ALTERNATIVES ARE THE BEST.

What is Charles's/ Charlene's problem?

ENCOURAGE IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM. PROMPT AS NEEDED.

[NOTE THAT TWO PROBLEMS ARE PREDICTABLE:

- 1) CAN'T REMEMBER DUE TO PREOCCUPATION WITH HER/HIS HIV STATUS, AND
- 2) IS AFRAID.]

Let's say the goal is to make doctor's appointments on a regular basis.

So now that we know what the problem and the goal is, let's get to step 3 in problem-solving.

What are some different actions Charles's/ Charlene's might take?

ENCOURAGE GENERATING ALTERNATIVES SUCH AS:

KEEPING A SCHEDULE,

HAVING THE CLINIC CALL AND REMIND HER/HIM,

HAVING SOMEONE GO WITH HER/HIM,

SET UP A BUDDY SYSTEM,  
TAKE LITTLE STEPS TOWARD GOING ON HER OWN,  
AVOIDING SUBSTANCES THE DAY BEFORE APPOINTMENTS  
IMAGINING BEING ABLE TO GO, AND SO ON.

What are the advantages or disadvantages of each alternative?

Or what do you think the consequences would be of doing each alternative?

ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES.

HAVE PARTICIPANT CHOOSE AN ACTION THAT WOULD WORK BEST FOR HIM/HER PERSONALLY.

IN DISCUSSING OPTIONS, HAVE YOUTH EXPLAIN WHY CHOSEN OPTION IS BEST FOR HIM/HER

The last steps for each of you would be to choose an alternative that works best for you, to do it, and then to review it.

Now we want you to come up with a list of some of the problems or barriers to attending medical appointments or taking care of your health that you have experienced.

As we talk about these, write down any that apply to you on this page.

GIVE YOUTH BARRIERS TO KEEPING MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS WORKSHEET.

You will use one of these this week as a between-sessions goal.

ENCOURAGE LISTING OF BARRIERS.

HAVE YOUTH GENERATE SEVERAL EXAMPLES.

IF APPROPRIATE, MENTION BARRIERS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN MENTIONED IN PREVIOUS SESSIONS.

IF YOUTH CAN NOT GENERATE BARRIERS SPONTANEOUSLY, HAVE YOUTH THINK ABOUT THE LAST TIME(S) HE/SHE MISSED AN APPOINTMENT AND WHY.

That was very good.

In a moment we are going to use the list of barriers you made for one of your goals this week.

Exercise 7: What Is Next?  
(10 minutes)

**[The purposes of this exercise are to encourage applications of skills learned in the workshop to outside settings. Setting between-sessions goals, introducing the next topic, enhancing benefit awareness and showing appreciation the methods used.]**

We are at the end of today's session.

We talked about increasing motivation for attending medical appointments, overcoming barriers to going to them, and building skills that make keeping appointments easier.

I would like you to agree to take a step between the sessions.

The step would be related to keeping medical appointments.

Here are some examples of what your goal might be:

1. Make a schedule of your medical appointments for the next three months.
2. Carry on a two minute conversation about staying healthy with a nurse or receptionist in a medical office.
3. Make a list of four negative attitudes that you have toward keeping appointments and write how you would argue against them.

It works best when your goal is clear, not too easy or too hard, can be accomplished this week, and has a clear endpoint so you can recognize when it's been accomplished.

What will you agree to do between sessions?

ASK YOUTH WHAT HIS OR HER GOAL WILL BE.

WHAT STEP WILL HE OR SHE TRY TO TAKE?

I'd like to try another goal as well. It's already written there on your goal log.

From the list of your barriers to keeping medical appointments you made moments ago, pick a barrier and use the first four steps of the problem-solving model to develop some strategies for overcoming it.

Here's a problem solving worksheet you can use.

**GIVE YOUTH PROBLEM SOLVING WORKSHEET.**

Do you have any questions about that goal?

**PAUSE FOR RESPONSE.**

At the beginning of the next session, we will see how you made out.

I will also ask you to report on your Drug and Alcohol Calendars, so please remember to fill them in daily.

The next session is about making communication to health care providers easier and more effective.

To end the session, let's hear about the best thing you got from today's session.

**HAVE YOUTH REPORT ON BENEFIT OF SESSION.**

**GIVE APPRECIATION TO YOUTH FOR PARTICIPATION, POINT OUT ONE THING YOUTH DID DURING SESSION YOU PARTICULARLY APPRECIATED.**

**END OF SESSION 14**