

The United Republic of Tanzania



Ministry of Health  
and Social Welfare

# **CUE CARDS**

## **Provider Initiated HIV Testing and Counselling (PITC)**



National AIDS Control Programme

**March 2009**

## HELPFUL TIPS FOR USING CUE CARDS

- Cue cards serve as a shared language, the shared foundation for continued learning. The cue cards are one tool we will use together to sustaining the skills of HTC. **The cue cards are your most important tool in operations for HTC.**
- Counselors all over the world have used them. At the beginning using these cards may feel awkward. **Trust the learning process and use the cards.**
- **Be patient with yourself when learning to use these cards.** Anything we learn takes time and practice before it becomes comfortable. Add some spice to your regular way of counselling. Accept the challenge.
- The cue cards will help you **remain focused** on your client's or patient's risk and successfully deliver the intervention. Remember you are the deliverer following a map (cue cards) ensuring that your passenger (client or patient) gets to his/her destination (risk reduction) **Give it a try.**
- If you commit to use the cards, you can be assured that you will deliver a consistent and effective intervention. **Every client or patient deserves to receive the same benefits of HTC. Using the cue cards will make a difference.**
- Remember that the questions have been developed to help you to achieve the objective of each component of the intervention. The questions build on each other. **Take one step at a time, one question at a time.**
- Having the questions helps you to elicit important information from your client and the scripted questions allow you to really listen to your client rather than trying to think of the next question. **Take advantage of having the questions.**
- In using the cue card, try using the questions provided. It is alright to skip a question if the client or patient already gave you the information or if it is not relevant to your client's or patient's situation. **Keep a balance between listening and asking the cue card questions. Then purposefully select your next question.** Role-playing will provide you with opportunities to practice.

- If the client or patient is silent after you have asked a question, he/she may need a moment to think, process, reflect and/or digest what has been asked or discussed. If you need to organize your thoughts or to decide on the next appropriate and relevant question take a moment of silence to do this. **The use of silence is an effective counselling skill.**
- At your site you might meet clients as a group and decide if you should modify some questions to reflect your culture and issues specific to your site. You may need to translate questions into local languages and the vernacular of your site. **Confirm with others that the questions you develop are asking what you are attempting to elicit from the client or patient.**
- Developing questions that elicit the appropriate information from the client is challenging. **Crafting effective questions requires a thoughtful and meticulous process.**
- Remember some questions are intended to help the client or patient to gain insight, reflect on alternative choices, or recognize conflicts. **Understand the purpose of each question.**
- When revising the questions, be careful to ensure that each question follows the previous one and assists in accomplishing the goals and objectives of the relevant component. **Only revise a question if another question might be better to enhance your ability to reach the objectives of the component.**
- Remember most of the cue card questions are carefully developed, counselor tested and proven to elicit important information from the client or patient. **There is no need to re-invent the wheel. If questions already work for you, keep them.**
- We strongly recommend that if you revise or translate the questions from the cue cards into another language, that you also develop a complete new set of cue cards for each counselor. **You should use the cue cards in your HTC sessions for at least the first three months following the HTC training. After that time, your supervisor may approve the use of the session guide alone if you've demonstrated consistent competence in achieving each of the intervention components in your HTC sessions.**

**Provider Initiated HIV Testing and Counselling Protocol  
Initial Session**

<b>Protocol Component: Initial Session (Pre-Test Information)</b>	<b>Time-Minutes</b>
<b>1. Introductions and Orientation to the Session</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>2. Pre-Test Information</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>3. HIV Test Preparation</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>Initial Session: Total Time</b>	<b>6-9</b>
<b>4. Perform Rapid HIV Test - Laboratory of Counselling Room</b>	<b>15-20</b>

**Initial Session**

## Introduction and Orientation to the Session

2-3 minutes

<b>Introduce self to client/patient</b>	<i>Hello, my name is _____. I'll be talking with you today about what brought you to the health facility.</i>
<b>Describe your role as health care provider</b>	<i>My role as your health care provider is to identify why you came to the health facility today and inform you about the services we provide. At our health facility, we have a policy to provide all client/patients with information about HIV and to recommend that all client/patients be tested for HIV.</i>  <i>Inform client/patient that declining to test would not affect their access to other services offered at the health facility.</i>
<b>Explain confidentiality</b>	<i>I want you to know that what we are going to talk about today will be kept private. That means that your personal information will be absolutely confidential and will not be discussed with anyone else.</i>

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<b>Pre-Test Information</b>		<b>2-3 minutes</b>
<b>Explain the meaning of HIV</b>	<i>HIV is a virus that fights your immune systems and causes CD4 cells to die. Over time, this makes you weak and prone to various infections. If these infections are not identified earlier and treated, then an individual dies.</i>	
<b>Discuss the importance of testing</b>	<i>To know one's HIV sero status will assist in getting appropriate care for their medical condition, treatment with ARV, prevent HIV infection from mother to child, improve on client/patients' nutrition and from infecting others with HIV.</i>	
<b>Explain the testing and counselling procedure to the client/patient</b>  <b>Address immediate questions and concerns</b>	<i>We will talk here for about 12 minutes. Then, if you decide to be tested, you will go to _____ to have a finger prick (venous blood draw) for the tests. It takes about 10 minutes for the lab to process and to read the tests. When the result is ready, I will have you come back here and we will look at the HIV test result and talk about what it means. Then we will talk about how you can protect yourself and others from HIV. Is that clear?</i>  <i>Taking into account the above benefits, would you consider to be tested for HIV?</i>  <i>Before we go any further, do you have any concerns or questions you need to talk about right now?</i>	

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## HIV Test Preparation

2-3 minutes

<b>Discuss client/patient's HIV test history and response to previous experience</b>	<i>Have you ever been tested before? Could you tell me what the experience was like for you?</i>
<b>Discuss the client/patient's understanding of the meaning of positive and negative HIV test results</b>  <b>Clarify client/patient's misunderstanding about the meaning of HIV test results</b>	<i>What does a positive HIV test result mean to you? How would you understand a HIV negative or HIV positive result? HIV negative test result means that the blood has no antibodies against the HIV. HIV positive test result means that the blood has antibodies against the HIV.</i>
<b>Assess client/patient's readiness to be tested and receive the test results</b>  <b>Response to positive results</b>  <b>Response to negative results</b>	<i>What test result are you expecting today? Have you thought about how you would deal with each of the possible test results? How would your life change? How would your behavior change if you were to find out you were not infected with HIV? How would you deal with HIV positive result? How would you reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to your partner(s)?</i>
<b>Determine client/patient's test decision</b>	<i>Have you decided if you would like to be tested and receive your HIV test result today? If patient/client declines to be tested, THANK THE CLIENT/PATIENT, offer assistance to access either client initiated (VCT) or provider initiated (PITC) HIV testing and counselling in the future and inform him or her that not testing for HIV will in no way interfere with services offered by the health facility.</i>
<b>Proceed if client/patient elects to be tested</b>	<i>Fill out the laboratory form with client/patients names and health facility registration number</i>

**Provider Initiated HIV Testing and Counselling Protocol  
Second Session A  
Negative Test Result**

<b>Protocol Component: Follow-up Session – HIV Negative</b>	<b>Time-Minutes</b>
<b>5. Provide HIV Negative Test Result</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>6. Discuss Ways to Remain Negative</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>7. Discuss about Client/Patient’s Feelings/Emotions and Support</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>Second Session A: Total Time</b>	<b>6-9</b>



**Provide HIV-Negative Test Result****2-3 minutes****Inform client/patient that the test results are available***Your results are ready now.***Provide results clearly and simply (show the client/patient his/her test result slip)***Let's look at your test result, and then we'll talk about how best you understand the result.**The test result is negative, which means you have not been infected with HIV.***Explore client/patient's reaction to the test result***What does this result mean to you?**How does it feel to hear that you are not infected with HIV?***Discuss window period and need to re-test***I want to clarify that this means that as of less than 3 months ago, you were not infected with HIV. Therefore there is a very small chance that the test may have missed a recent infection.**You may want to consider another test in three months and encourage your partner to come and be tested.***If client/patient has ongoing risk, convey concern and urgency about client/patient's risks (as appropriate)***It seems that unless your risk behavior and the other issues we identified are addressed, you may become infected with HIV. Let's talk about a plan to reduce your risk.*

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## Discuss Ways to Remain Negative

2-3 minutes

### Identify priority risk reduction behavior

*It is important that we prioritize. What are the most important issues that we need to address to reduce risk?*

*Given what we have talked about, what do you think makes it most likely that you will again put yourself at risk for an STD or HIV?*

*How would you reduce your risk for STDs/HIV?*

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**Discuss Client/Patient's Feelings/Emotions and Support**

**2-3 minutes**

**Emphasize the importance of the client discussing with a trusted friend or relative the intention and content of the risk reduction plan**

*It's important for you to share your behavior change plan with someone. Who could you trust to tell about your HIV test experience?*

*Who in your life can provide you with support so you can avoid situations that put you at risk?*

*What are your feelings about talking to your partner(s) about your test result?*

*It is essential that you understand that your test result does not indicate whether or not your sex partner is infected with HIV.*

*Your partner should be tested in order to know his/her result.*

*Provide male & female condom and demonstrate on proper use.*

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**Provider Initiated HIV Testing and Counselling Protocol  
Second Session B  
Positive Test Result**

<b>Protocol Component: Follow-up Session – HIV Positive</b>	<b>Time-Minutes</b>
<b>5. Provide HIV Positive Test Result</b>	<b>3-4</b>
<b>6. Negotiate Disclosure and Partner Referral</b>	<b>3-5</b>
<b>7. Discuss Positive Living</b>	<b>2-4</b>
<b>8. Identify Sources of Support and Provide onward Referrals</b>	<b>4-8</b>
<b>9. Address Risk Reduction Issues</b>	<b>0-3</b>
<b>Second Session B: Total Time</b>	<b>10-24</b>

<b>Provide HIV-Positive Test Result</b>		<b>3-4 minutes</b>
<b>Inform client/patient that the test results are available</b>	<i>Your test results are ready now.</i>	
<b>Provide test results clearly and simply</b>	<i>The test result is positive, indicating that you are infected with HIV.</i>	
<b>Review the meaning of the result</b>	<i>This result does not mean you have AIDS and does not indicate when you may become ill from the virus.</i>	
<b>Allow the client/patient time to absorb the meaning of the result</b>	<i>Take your time. We have plenty of time to talk about the results.</i>	
<b>Explore client/patient's understanding of the result</b>	<i>How do you understand this result? What does this result mean to you?</i>	
<b>Assess how client/patient is coping with result</b>	<i>It can be difficult dealing with knowing that you're infected with HIV. How are you doing? How are you feeling about this test result?</i>	
<b>Acknowledge the challenges of dealing with a HIV positive result</b>	<i>You need to take time to adjust to this, but with time you will be able to cope and continue with your life.</i>	

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<b>Negotiate Disclosure and Partner Referral</b>	<b>3-5 minutes</b>
<b>Explore client/patient's feelings about telling partners about his/her HIV positive test result</b>	<p><i>Have you thought about telling your partner(s) about your test result?</i></p> <p><i>What are your feelings about talking with your partner(s) about your test result?</i></p> <p><i>What are your concerns?</i></p>
<b>Remind client/patient that his/her result does not indicate the partner's HIV status</b>	<p><i>It is essential that you understand, that your test result does not indicate what your sex partner's result will be. Your partner may not yet be infected.</i></p>
<b>Identify partners that are at risk and need to be informed of their risk for HIV infection</b>	<p><i>Who do you believe may need to know about your test result? Are there particular partners you are worried about?</i></p> <p><i>Who do you feel you need to tell?</i></p>
<b>Discuss possible approaches to disclosure of sero-status to partners</b>	<p><i>How do you think you would tell your partner(s) about your test result? What would you like to say to your partner(s)?</i></p> <p><i>Would this be difficult for you?</i></p>
<b>Anticipate potential partner reactions</b>	<p><i>How do you believe your partner will react to you telling him/her about your test result?</i></p> <p><i>How have you and he/she handled difficult conversations in the past?</i></p>
<b>Support client/patient to refer partner for testing</b>	<p><i>Your partner has to be tested in order to know his/her HIV status.</i></p> <p><i>Tell me your feelings about asking your partner to be tested.</i></p> <p><i>How would you and your partner handle it if he/she is not infected?</i></p>
<b>Practice and role-play different approaches to disclosure</b>	<p><i>Let's imagine that I am your partner. Tell me about your test results and I will respond. It is good to practice.</i></p>
<b>Provide the client/patient with support</b>	<p><i>There has been a lot we have talked about today. It is a challenge to deal with being HIV infected; however, with time and support you will adjust and can live positively.</i></p>

## Discuss Positive Living

2-4 minutes

**Discuss with the client/patient about positive living**

**If client/patient is not prepared, provide client/patient with a pamphlet**

*There are many people who are infected with the HIV virus and living well.*

*Have you ever seen/heard anyone who is infected with the virus and living well?*

*Who do you know that is HIV infected and living well?*

*Have you heard about positive living? Let's talk about that.*

*Positive living means taking care of your health and your emotional well being in order to enhance your life and stay well longer.*

*Positive living involves good nutrition, follow-up medical care, such as TB preventive treatment, support, reducing risk of infecting others, screening and treatment for STIs and sense of optimism and well-being.*

*What can you do to live positively?*

*If pregnant mother facilitate and refer to PMTCT and CTC if possible make active follow-up*

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<b>Identify Sources of Support and Provide onward Referrals</b>	<b>4-8minutes</b>
<p><b>Assess who the client/patient would like to tell about his/her HIV positive test results</b></p>	<p><i>Who can be supportive to you in dealing with this?</i></p> <p><i>You'll want to tell someone you trust, someone who will keep your confidence.</i></p> <p><i>With whom in your life would you like to share your test result?</i></p> <p><i>How do you think he/she would react? What do you think he/she would say?</i></p>
<p><b>Identify person, family member, or friend to help the client/patient through the process of dealing with HIV</b></p> <p><b>Coping and support</b></p> <p><b>Planning for the future</b></p> <p><b>Positive living</b></p> <p><b>Medical follow-up</b></p>	<p><i>There are a lot of issues you'll want to address over time. It is sometimes helpful to have someone to help guide you and assist you as you weigh options and make decisions. Who could help you with this?</i></p> <p><i>Who in your life could help with adjusting to living with HIV?</i></p> <p><i>Paying attention to your emotional and physical health and your medical care are important parts of living positively. Who will support you in these changes?</i></p>
<p><b>Discuss medical care</b></p>	<p><i>Now that you are HIV infected it is essential that you receive specific medical follow-up.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to getting support from family and friends, you need medical care that can help you feel better and live longer even though you have HIV infection.</i></p> <p><i>You need to be referred to the Care and Treatment Center that provides evaluation and treatment for HIV. Here is a referral form for you to give to the healthcare provider in that clinic that will let him/her know you are receiving treatment for another illness at this health facility and that you have been tested for HIV.</i></p> <p><i>It is important that you go to the Care and Treatment Center as soon as possible.</i></p>

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<b>Address Risk Reduction Issues</b>	<b>0-3 minutes</b>
<b>Assess client/patient's plan to reduce the risk of transmission to current partners</b>	<p><i>Tell me how you plan to protect your partner from acquiring HIV.</i></p> <p><i>How will you be intimate and close without spreading HIV?</i></p>
<b>Explore patient's plan for reducing the risk of transmission to future partners</b>	<p><i>When you have a new partner, how are you going to protect that partner from HIV?</i></p>
<b>Address disclosure of HIV status to future partners</b>	<p><i>You will need to tell your new partner about your HIV infection? If yes,</i></p> <p><i>How will you tell your partner? (Role Play)</i></p>
<b>Encourage the client/patient to protect others from HIV</b>	<p><i>It is important for you to care for yourself and to protect others from HIV. One person, like yourself, can change the tide of the epidemic, by being honest with your partners and ensuring you engage only in safe sex behaviors.</i></p> <p><i>How can we help you to prepare for this?</i></p> <p><i>Ask whether the client has questions or concerns. Explain to the client how to contact the clinic in the event that concerns arise</i></p> <p><i>Discuss the importance of testing for other family members including children for children with consent from parent or guardian</i></p> <p><i>Continue treating client/patient for initial medical problem</i></p>

Final

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