

# **A study of Health Care Providers' Use of Knowledge and Skills derived from the Caribbean HIV/AIDS Regional Training (CHART) Network**

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## **Background:**

A study was conducted to evaluate how training programmes conducted by the CHART Network have influenced non-physician health care providers' self-reported practices. CHART's mission is to strengthen the capacity of health care personnel in the Caribbean to provide quality HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment services. The Network is comprised of 6 national training centres (Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, and Haiti (2)) and a Regional Coordinating Unit.

## **Methods:**

A stratified random sample of health care providers, except physicians, who attended CHART trainings between 2004-2009, was selected. Respondents included health care personnel from Jamaica (52%), Trinidad and Tobago (17%), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (11%), the Bahamas (11%), and other Caribbean countries (9%). Weighted sample size was 6887. Data were collected using an online survey and telephone calls and analyzed using SPSS.

## **Results:**

Eighty-eight percent of respondents reported using knowledge and skills acquired from their training in their own practice. A larger percentage (58%) of frontline providers (nurses, pharmacists and others) reported sharing new knowledge and skills with colleagues compared with those who had less/no direct contact with patients (15%). Sharing resources received from training (84%) and encouraging co-workers to practice differently (83%) were the main methods of sharing training information. Top needs identified for further training were “psychosocial support for people infected/affected by HIV/AIDS” (88%), “clinical management of AIDS, including understanding the side effects of ART” (83%) and “initiation of ART” (80%). Other topic areas requested included treating opportunistic infections (79%) and TB/HIV co-infections (75%).

**Conclusions:**

Training was judged to be useful, relevant and effective. More front-line care providers reported sharing skills and knowledge obtained from training with co-workers, demonstrating that there are exponential benefits to training these staff categories. Client satisfaction studies and studies of outcomes of care related to training are necessary to complement this type of study.