



A Break Through in the Field of HIV Treatment

Zeya Sew*

Department of Analytical Chemistry, University of Yangon, Kamayut, Yangon, Myanmar

*Corresponding author email: mailSzva21@edu.mm

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DESCRIPTION

Pharmacists have contributed significantly to HIV/AIDS research and continue to demonstrate their value as members of the healthcare team through innovative clinical trials. Pharmacists are making strides in variety of healthcare settings, including hospitals, clinics, and community pharmacies. There is a considerable risk of health-related issues and the development of adverse events due to the complex regimens of Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART), the longer life span of individuals living with HIV, and other concomitant drugs taken for comorbid disease conditions. These side effects could lead to a decline in HAART adherence, which could lead to the development of HIV medication resistance. Pharmacists are setting an example for how they can help combat medication-related errors while also continuing to contribute as healthcare practitioners as part of a holistic healthcare team, as seen by rising research. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) has gone from an acute to a chronic condition after the creation and administration of Highly Active Antiretroviral Treatment (HAART). According to the centers for disease control and prevention, HAART increased the life expectancy of HIV patients from 10 to 20 years between 1996 and 2003. Patients infected with HIV are now more likely to require chronic therapy in primary and ambulatory care settings, rather than acute treatment in an inpatient environment. During this period, pharmacists have taken on more responsibilities as members of healthcare teams that specialize in caring for this population patients. Pharmacist's responsibilities have expanded beyond caring for HIV patients in community pharmacies to include direct patient care in hospitals and outpatient clinics.

Concerns for HIV patients go beyond raising CD4 cell counts and lowering viral loads. A multidisciplinary team is comprehensive, patient-specific approach is required for successful treatment of patients with this disease state. For successful treatment, all parts of HAART must be managed. Pharmacokinetic drug monitoring, medication reconciliation, therapeutic medication recommendations,

patient counselling, adherence consult services, and pharmaceutical therapy management are all services that clinical pharmacists can provide. Pharmaceutical errors have been avoided, medication misuse has been reduced, and health-related outcomes have improved as a result of these services. Because of the intricacy of HAART, it's more important to keep track of side effects, drug-drug interactions, and HIV-1 virus resistance patterns that can emerge as a result of patient noncompliance.

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CONCLUSION

Many effective drugs are being used to treat HIV but, when these treatments are not prescribed, administered, or taken correctly, they can cause considerable harm (increased toxicity) or viral resistance. Pharmacists are taking on more responsibilities in the care of HIV patients, and research demonstrating our efforts are on the rise. Despite this, many of these efforts go unnoticed.