My Pet Peeve About PrEP

December 12, 2019 By Larry Watson

Hello people! How is everyone? I pray all is well. There is no reason for it being so long since my last post, so I truly apologize and ask for everyone to trust that it'll never happen again. I've made some bonehead decisions in the last few months and as a result I've have been depressed and not functioning at times, all while I pretend to be happy.

I've started a couple of new chapters in my life as far as work is concerned. I was shift coordinator for an HIV and STI testing and counseling site and working eight hours every day. The entire process of testing has changed so much from what I remember. The procedure was really geared toward accumulating numbers and was not client centered.

At that location, they removed the pre and post testing parts of the exam, which were the most important aspects of the test. Here in Philadelphia it's very different than it was in New York where I formerly worked. I truly miss and appreciate the ACT Team, the group with whom I worked in the Bronx.

Since then, I've moved on to a more client-centered organization that provides services, which I feel is much more rewarding for me. I'm now working at Prevention Point Philadelphia and the demographics for the population of people we serve are really diverse. This allows us to provide a variety of services to persons with a positive sero status as well as those who are at risk of acquiring HIV.

Right now, in the field, as well as in the clinics, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is the foremost topic of all conversations about decreasing the risk of acquiring HIV. The statistics for PrEP as a prevention tool are astounding, especially now that Descovy has been approved. But, personally, I am concerned about any and all possible side effects of the drugs used as PrEP (unpopular as that viewpoint might be to voice).

Don't get me wrong. I truly support PrEP treatment as prevention in all communities and the numbers are moving in positive directions as a result of the work of frontline staff. Both U=U and PrEP as prevention campaigns can be regarded as breakthrough initiatives. But I believe the campaigns have also made some people and organizations complacent when it comes to providing comprehensive and in-depth HIV awareness prevention and education information.

People, let's not assume that everyone reads all the prescribing information about these drugs. In addition, let's keep doing aggressive outreach and not just going into places identified as locations where people are supposedly at a higher risk of HIV because they are homeless, use substances or

identify as MSM.

Okay, that is it for me. Until next time, everyone take care, have a wonderful holiday and please take heed to the following statement, which can save you whole lot of pain: “Don’t trade what you want most for what you want in the moment.”

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/blog/pet-peeve-prep