

Strategies for Improving Participant Retention in Zimbabwe

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Presentation outline

- ❖ Background
- ❖ Retention Challenges
- ❖ Strategies to Improve Retention
- ❖ Lessons Learnt
- ❖ Conclusion

Background



Seke South CRS

5km



Zengeza CRS



Spilhaus CRS

Accrual, Retention & Early Terminations

| | Spilhaus CRS | Zengeza CRS | Seke South CRS | Total |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|------------|
| Enrolment | 205 | 208 | 217 | 630 |
| Early exits | 10 | 5 | 10 | 25 |
| Chronic Defaulters | 18 | 14 | 23 | 55 |
| Retention rates | 87% | 89% | 88% | --- |

Reasons for early exits & chronic defaulters

❖ Early study exits

- ❖ 14 male influence – lack of disclosure
- ❖ 5 Lack of time – new jobs
- ❖ 1 Religious reasons – blood draws.
- ❖ 5 Other - personal

❖ Chronic Defaulters

- ❖ New partners - 5
- ❖ Relocation – rural (20), neighbouring countries (26)
- ❖ Lack of time (4)

Strategies to Improve Retention

- ❖ Timely identification of defaulters and follow up within a day - phone calls or home visit.
- ❖ Intensified courtesy phone calls, home visits and reminders about the next visit.
- ❖ Intensified rural home visits.
- ❖ Intensified follow up of early exiters.
- ❖ Rigorous update of locator information.

Strategies to Improve Retention

- Intensified male involvement





Strategies to Improve Retention

- ❖ Identified regular defaulters and paid special attention to them when they attend for their visits.
- ❖ Regular staff meetings to review retention targets and to discuss regular defaulters.
- ❖ Emphasised the importance of retention to participants during retention meetings.
- ❖ Hold regular meetings with CAB.



Participants` Needs

- ❖ Picking up participants
- ❖ Reimbursement for long distance travel
- ❖ Open clinics after hours, weekends and public holidays
- ❖ Incentives for milestone visits
- ❖ Entertainment and refreshments suggested by participants
- ❖ 2 – 3 months product supply



Impact of Strategies

- ❖ Extensive follow up of exited participants – 10/25 rejoined study so far.
- ❖ Maintain contact with participants in neighbouring countries - 1 transfer, 3 are back in Zimbabwe.
- ❖ All rural participants are now attending



Impact of Strategies

- ❖ Cultivated a culture that makes participants feel valued, needed, respected, wanted and this makes them look forward to the next visit.
- ❖ Retention meeting attendance for male partners from 52 to 175
- ❖ Retention rates as of 3 October 2011
SP 89%, SS 89% and ZZ 91%

Lessons Learnt

- ❖ Retention is a process that starts from recruitment up to end of study.
- ❖ Extensive follow up of participants is crucial from the beginning of the study.
- ❖ Identify retention team/officer
- ❖ Relocation to neighboring countries has been there from time immemorial and will continue.
- ❖ Male involvement is key to high retention.
- ❖ Need to be sensitive to participants` needs.

Conclusion

- ❖ Retention is everyone`s responsibility. Staff and participants should understand the importance of retention.
- ❖ Proper planning, continuous monitoring, and creative problem-solving are important to achieve high retention rates.

Thank you

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- Staff
- CAB



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