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## CD-ROM Publication

### Track B - Evaluation of ARV delivery outcome in resource constrained settings

#### CDB0220 - The perception of treatment by PLWHs attending a treatment centre in Nigeria

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**Background:** Funding from international donors has led to increased provision of Highly Active Antiretroviral therapy (HAART) in Nigeria. Successful therapy requires more than 95% adherence, this can only be achieved with patient's involvement in treatment plan. A patient's beliefs about their illness and the effectiveness of medication are predictive of adherence.

**Methods:** The study used questionnaires randomly administered to 120 patients receiving treatment. In few cases when patient cannot fill out questionnaire, face-to face interview was used and translation into native language was done where language is a barrier. Only 114 questionnaires were returned completely filled for analysis.

**Results:** Respondents were made up of 33(29%) males and 81(71%) females. Most, 87(76.3%) of them fell within the age range of 20-39 years. Apart from the 6(5.3%) without formal education, the rest were educated with secondary education being the highest; 56(49.1%) followed by graduates; 44(38.6%). Most of the subjects; 103(90.3%) are on antiretroviral (ARV) drugs, 9(7.9%) are not on ARVs while 2(1.8%) used to be on ART. The result of the assessment showed that 90(78.9%) believe that HIV can be cured with 32(28.1%) believing that this can be achieved with the use of ARV drugs, 23(20.2%) feel through prayer and fasting and 27(23.7%) believe that the combination of ARVs, prayer and fasting will effect a cure. Only 103 of the respondents answered when asked their opinion on the efficacy of ART. Analysis showed that 99(96.1%) believe in its efficacy, 3(2.9%) do not believe in it, the remaining 1(1%) was undecided. The main reasons for belief in the efficacy of ARVs were, "I feel stronger, healthier", 65.7%; followed by "increased weight", 26.3%.

**Conclusions:** In assessing response to HAART, measuring absolute CD4 count alone is not adequate. The study shows the need for more patient education on HIV and treatment goals during adherence counselling to ensure correct belief and adherence to treatment.

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