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# Achieving Virological Control and Engagement Through Tailored Peer Mentoring: Successful Conclusions of a Collaborative Project Supported by the Fast-Track Cities Initiative

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METRO Charity

## Conflict of Interest

In relation to this presentation I declare that I have no conflict of interest

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## ADHERENCE

Incomplete adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) and difficulty in engaging with clinical care results in poor health outcomes for people living with HIV



## BARRIERS

- Stigma (internalised, societal, institutional)
- Mental Health
- Migration
- Housing
- Drugs & Alcohol
- Isolation
- Language / culture
- Navigating healthcare



## FUNDING

Three-year peer mentoring programme funded by the Fast-Track Cities initiative

Mentor is embedded in Caldecot and Harrison Wing clinics (MDT, ward rounds and YAC)

## PEDRO

**PATIENT:** FTCPS79GST

**DIAGNOSES:** 2011

**REFERRAL:** 16.02.22

**AGE:** 49

**GENDER:** CIS MALE

**SEXUALITY:** GAY

**ETHNICITY:** LATIN AMERICA

**NATIONALITY:** BOLIVIA

**CD4:** 317

**VL:** 176,000



### I STRONGLY DISAGREE WITH:

- I can manage my own health and treatments
- I understand that taking my HIV medication regularly leads to having an undetectable VL, which means I can't pass the virus when having sex
- I feel it's important for me to look after my health
- I can talk openly about my HIV status to friends and family and have their support
- In general I feel positive about myself and my future

### I DISAGREE WITH:

- I'm comfortable talking about HIV with my sexual partners

### I STRONGLY AGREE WITH:

- I'm concerned about my emotional and mental health
- I'd like to improve my quality of life

### BARRIERS:

- I find it difficult to accept my diagnoses
- I'm worried about being asked to take medication
- I'm worried about confidentiality



## MY SUPPORT PLAN



### THEMES

1. HIV KNOWLEDGE
2. ADHERENCE
3. FAITH & SEXUALITY
4. SHARING HIV STATUS
5. MENTAL HEALTH
6. IMMIGRATION
7. ALCOHOL MISUSE
8. NAVIGATING HEALTHCARE

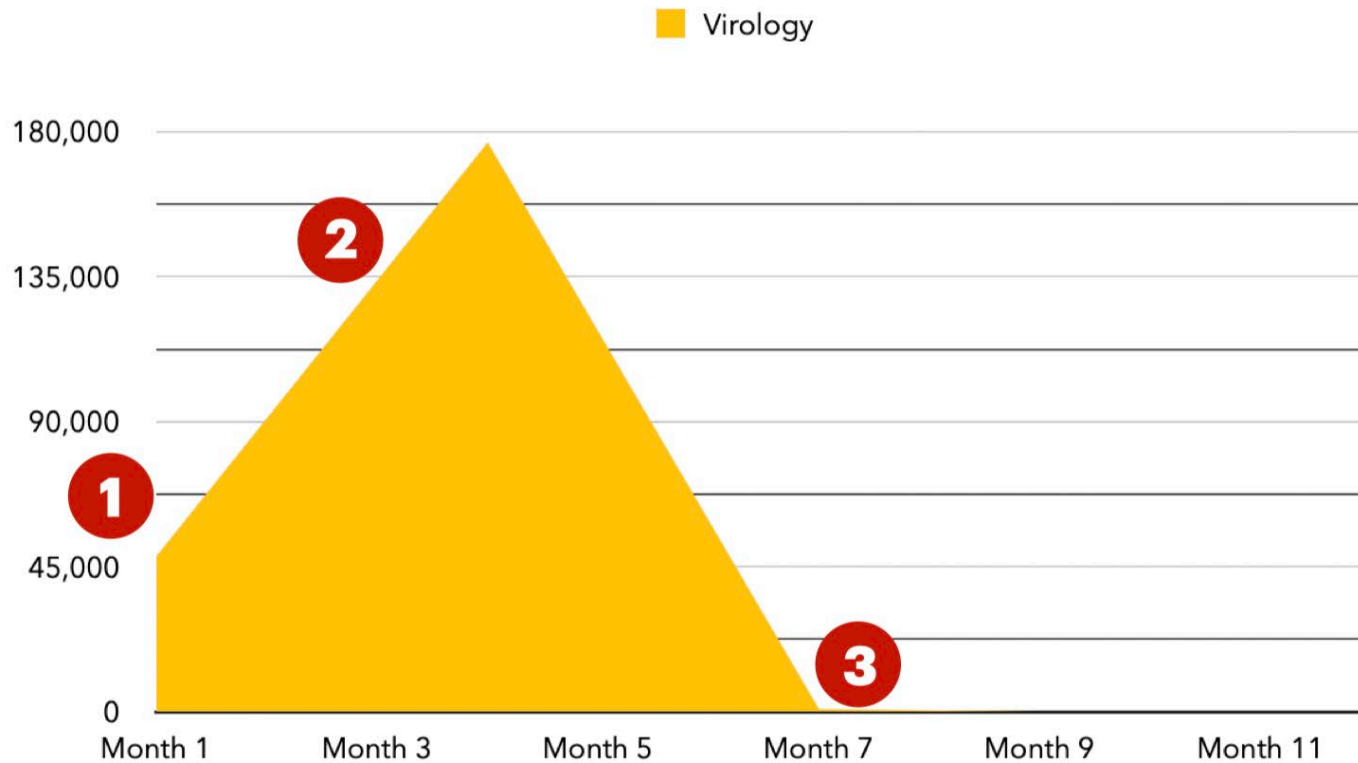
### REFERRALS

CASA LATINA, IRMO, AYMARA. M-POX & HPV VACCINATION

### SIGNPOST

MIGRANT LEGAL ACTION. SOUTHWARK LAW CENTRE. LAWSTOP.

**AIM:** 60% of patients who engage with peer mentor to achieve a **VL < 200** copies/ml within 12 months of referral being made.



## VIROLOGY

- 1** Two months before referral (Darunavir, Ritonavir & Truvada)
- 2** At point of referral
- 3** Viral suppression (Biktarvy)



"I think many people don't know how to ask for help, so to have someone who 'comes without asking' just to say that helps at hand is quite valuable."

"It has taken me many years to get to this status since my diagnoses, but now I'm a 100% confident about staying undetectable."

**"THANKS!!"**



## MARY

**PATIENT:** FTCPS30GST

**DIAGNOSES:** 2013

**REFERRAL:** 14.04.21

**AGE:** 48

**GENDER:** CIS WOMAN

**SEXUALITY:** HETEROSEXUAL

**ETHNICITY:** BLACK AFRICAN

**NATIONALITY:** SOUTH AFRICA

**CD4:** 222

**VL:** 57,589



### I STRONGLY AGREE WITH:

- I can manage my own health and treatments
- I understand that taking my HIV medication regularly leads to having an undetectable VL, which means I can't pass the virus when having sex
- I feel it's important for me to look after my health
- In general I feel positive about myself and my future
- I'm concerned about my emotional and mental health
- I'd like to improve my quality of life

### I DISAGREE WITH:

- I'm comfortable talking about HIV with my sexual partners
- I can talk openly about my HIV status to friends and family and have their support

### BARRIERS:

- I'm worried about confidentiality
- Attending appointments is too expensive for me



## MY SUPPORT PLAN



### THEMES

1. HIV KNOWLEDGE
2. ADHERENCE
3. MENTAL HEALTH
4. MIGRATION
5. HOUSING
6. FINANCIAL SUPPORT
7. EMPLOYMENT

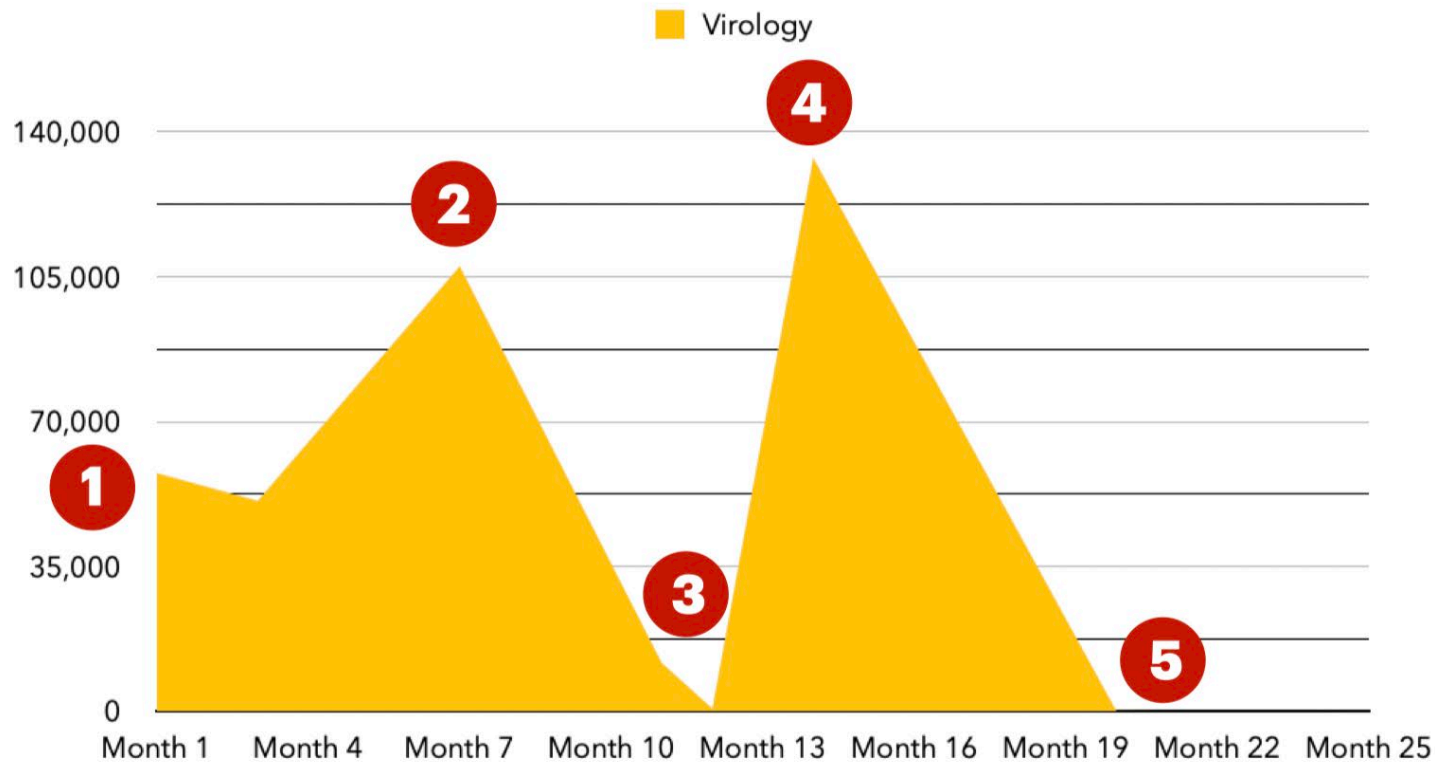
### REFERRALS

LIVING WELL, THE FOOD CHAIN, GLASS DOOR, METRO HARDSHIP GRANT, MIND.

### SIGNPOST

SHELTER, ST. MUNGO'S, GLASS-POOL, END FURNITURE POVERTY.

**AIM:** 60% of patients who engage with peer mentor to achieve a **VL < 200** copies/ml within 12 months of referral being made.



## VIROLOGY

- 1 At point of referral
- 2 Chest infection & Covid-19 > hospitalisation
- 3 ARV as inpatient
- 4 Psychotic episode
- 5 Injectables > Viral suppression

"Through injectables, I'm undetectable for the first time ever since my diagnoses 9 years ago. I'm healthy and in control of my wellbeing!"

"I was assisted to obtain my Indefinite Leave to Remain. Housing was sorted and I was also helped with in drafting my CV. We reached all the goals!"

**"THANKS!!"**





## THEMES

- HIV Knowledge (53)
- Sharing status (46)
- Mental Health (36)
- Adherence (28)
- Drugs & Alcohol (18)
- Housing (12)
- Isolation (9)
- Relationships (7)
- Financial Support (7)



## ADHERENCE

98% of patients engaging with the project achieved a VL < 200 copies/ml at some point during mentoring



## FEEDBACK

100% would recommend mentoring to others

80% feel confident about staying undetectable

100% feel more empowered to manage their own health





## MENTORING

- Individually tailored support plans in collaboration with patient
- Connecting beyond HIV
- Simplifying information
- Holistic support
- Transferable life-skills
- Riding waves
- Empowerment
- Flying solo



## EMBEDDING PEER MENTOR

- Normalises peer support as a routine part of clinic visits
- Allows for spontaneous interactions during scheduled appointments
- Fosters collaboration between mentor and clinical staff for mutual benefit, making it an ideal model.
- Getting to Zero: HIV Peer Support Mentoring Network



**THANKS!!**