

Introduction

This manual is designed for you, the trainer or co-ordinator of HIV/AIDS peer education programmes. Peer education is an important intervention in HIV/AIDS prevention and control. Through the training and support of the peer education trainer and/or co-ordinator, peer educators become important links between individuals and services. In this manual we use the term Trainer or Peer Educator Co-ordinator interchangeably. The term “Peer Educator Co-ordinator” could refer to either one person or a team of people, who are responsible for training and implementing Peer Education Workplace Programmes.

Purpose of this Training Manual:

- Clarify the role of the trainer/co-ordinator in relation to peer educators
- Help trainers/co-ordinators identify and train peer educators for HIV/AIDS workplace interventions
- Provide trainers/co-ordinators with a training outline and tools for conducting training sessions
- Provide ideas and tools for monitoring and motivating peer educators

How to use this Manual:

The manual is designed to give trainers/co-ordinators options for training peer educators depending on the time available for training. Section 2 in this manual, “Training Programmes” is a standard five-day training. However, we provide example schedules for three and four day trainings (in the appendix). Peer educators are required to absorb and understand a wealth of information, ideas and values. Peer educators must receive a minimum of three days training to cover the basics of HIV/AIDS peer education. Five days is the optimum length of time for a peer educator training.

Remember that training peer educators is an ongoing process. The co-ordinators need to monitor the interactions of the peer educator closely, keep the peer educator informed of new information and motivate him or her to keep going. Refresher trainings should be provided periodically. This manual offers ways to address each of these activities.

Structure of the Sessions:

The session length and content will vary based on the knowledge of the peer educators and the time available for training employees. This manual provides the core content and issues needed for educating peers. All these topics should be covered with peer educators during training and follow up sessions.

The training programmes are organised in the following manner:

- Topic
- Outcomes for peer educator
- Background information for presenting the session
- Main points for interactive discussions
- Group activities
- Role plays
- Overheads and handouts for the session

The appendix includes a glossary of terms, a resource list of AIDS Service organisations, sample schedules for three and four-day training, HIV/AIDS knowledge (company) questionnaire, observation sheets, session reporting and planning sheets, and an example overhead presentation to management.

The co-ordinator should organise materials for the peer educators to use with employees in the workplace. There are materials available from the Ministry of Health and Social Services, the Take Control Media Campaign, Catholic AIDS Action, the AIDS Law Unit of the Legal Assistance Centre, UNAIDS, UNICEF, Family Health International, and other HIV/AIDS service organisations. They should also link workplaces with one of the Namibian condom social marketing organisations (SMA or NASOMA).

SECTION ONE: INFORMATION FOR TRAINERS AND PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATORS

Background

Peer education is an important tool of HIV/AIDS prevention and control. Peer education relies on the interaction of two similar individuals (co-workers, people the same age or health status). The trained peer educator helps individuals with questions and concerns about HIV/AIDS. The peer education model is based on evidence that information received from someone of the same group is more readily accepted and trusted.

- Peer educators have information to share about prevention of HIV
- They distribute condoms to those who want them or who are concerned about getting infected
- They encourage peers who are worried about their HIV status to get tested
- They help family members cope with an HIV positive relative
- They identify places people can get treatment and care

There are some key characteristics of peer educators. These include:

- Understand the facts about HIV/AIDS
- Can communicate effectively with individuals
- Are comfortable with discussing sex and sexuality
- Have understanding and compassion for infected individuals
- Listen effectively
- Respect confidentiality of peers

It is important for you to carefully select individuals for peer education training and to use the tools in this manual to ensure that these individuals have the right skills to be successful peer educators. You will also need to monitor peer educators once they are trained and obtain feedback from employees on the peer interaction. After the formal training is completed, you will need to set up regular meetings to review issues and concerns that challenge peer educators.

The Role of the Peer Education Co-ordinator

The Peer Education Co-ordinator is central to a successful workplace programme. He/she is the interface between management, employees and the peer educators. The term “Peer Education Co-ordinator” refers to either one person or team of people who are responsible for implementing peer education workplace programmes. This can be a person who liaises with management in workplaces as well as those who conduct the actual peer educator trainings.

The peer education co-ordinator is responsible to:

1. Negotiate peer education programme with companies.

It is critical that management buys into the programme and understands the value of workplace HIV/AIDS interventions. Companies usually respond to the impact HIV/AIDS will have on the workforce and production. It may be useful to share data on the economic impact of HIV/AIDS in the workplace to get their attention. (The Appendix contains a sample overhead presentation on HIV/AIDS designed for presentations to management.)

As co-ordinator you should inform company management of the time and resource commitment required by and for the peer education programme. This should include training and meeting time for peer educators; an agreed upon time for peer interaction each month; and places for displaying materials and condoms. The optimum number of peer educators in a workplace setting is 1 for every 15 employees.

Management should be willing to provide a space for training and regular meetings with the peer educators. Finally, management should notify employees of the programme and express support for it in the company.

2. Identify peer educators for training.

Management may identify individuals in the company. In some cases, individuals will volunteer. It is your role to screen these individuals before, during and after the training to ensure that they can competently participate in the programme. This manual contains information on traits of a good peer educator.

3. Organise training schedule and activities.

You will need to work with management to determine the number of days and hours employees will be available for training. ANY EMPLOYEE INTERESTED IN BEING A PEER EDUCATOR MUST PARTICIPATE IN ALL THE TRAINING SESSIONS AND FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS.

Use this manual to organise the content and activities of the training sessions. Once you conduct the screening exercise, you will be able to determine the amount of information and training the peer educators will need.

4. Assess training and monitor peer education activities.

The appendix contains forms that you can use to evaluate the employees after the training and as they counsel and teach to peers. You can use the information from the assessment to help peer educators improve their skills.

5. Meet regularly with peer educators to discuss progress of peer education.

Ideally, you should organise monthly meetings with peer educators in each company. The meeting will allow you to address the concerns and questions of the peer educators. You can also provide specific HIV/AIDS resources and referral information that may be useful to the peer. Use these meetings as a

time to solve problems and share insights, as well as provide updated information and revision on certain topics. Don't forget to encourage the peer educators and thank them for the important role they are playing in their company.

6. Assist with condom distribution in the companies.

Companies that take part in peer education programmes should provide employees with condoms. Co-ordinators can assist with this by putting companies in contact with social marketing programmes (listed under resource list in the appendix) or the Ministry of Health and Social Services.

PEER EDUCATION TRAINING PROGRAMME-- GETTING STARTED

Once you have established the peer education programme within the company you can start the training. The manual is structured according to a five-day training schedule. For each day there is a schedule, objectives, content, activities, interactive discussions and role plays.

Being a good trainer:

As co-ordinator you must be a good teacher, a clear communicator and an organised trainer. In preparing for your training session we have identified some factors that contribute to good learning and communications.

How people learn:

People learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. Research shows that people only remember 10% of what they read and 50% of what they see and hear. However, 90% learn what they say as they do things. Learning is a good experience when people:

- Find it useful
- Are active in doing things
- Feel comfortable and/or safe in the learning environment
- Are interested in the subject
- Learn with others
- Are proud of learning something difficult

People have different ways of how they learn, but everyone needs certain things:

Respect: the participant needs to feel heard, honoured and respected as a person for more than what he/she knows or doesn't know; democratic social arrangements promote better, more humane experiences.

Immediacy: takes something from previous experience and relates it to something that will come after. The participants should be able to identify how he/she can use his/her knowledge, skills and attitudes in the exercise of learning that's being taught.

Experience: the participant gets to do something and can see how what he/she is learning has something to do with his/her own life experience.

Features of effective communications: Here is some information to remember before you start training.

- Keep to the point and make sure your message is correct and simple.
- Don't just lecture. Use visuals to convey your message and break up the group into small groups. Use videos and guest speakers to liven up your talk.
- Listen to the participants and make sure they understand what you are telling them before you move on to the next activity or topic. Don't assume people understand because they nod their head. Check in with participants and ask them to re-tell information in their own words.
- Get participants involved in the discussion. Ask for feedback as you talk. Ask people to give you examples to make a point instead of using only your examples.
- Summarise the key points you covered before you move on to the next topic.

The Training Programme for Peer Educators

The peer educator training may vary by the number of hours and days you have available. However, the basic content must be covered to prepare a peer educator for his/her job. This manual is designed to guide a co-ordinator through a five-day training. Section 2, “Five-Day Training Programme” contains all of the sessions for such a training, divided into each respective day. In the appendix, you will find schedules for three- and four-day trainings. These alternative trainings offer options to co-ordinators who might have limited time. Additionally, training could be spread out over a period of time: i.e. Days 1 through 3, and one month later Days 4 and 5.

Each day of sessions (in section 2) covers the following:

- Information about the specific content
- Points to make during interactive discussions
- Exercises for assessing the knowledge, and attitudes of the peer educator and for gauging their level of comfort with the content
- Role Plays to see how the trainees have assimilated and used the information in the session
- Tools for you to assess the trainee’s level of knowledge and attitudes after the training has ended

Tips for Successful Training:

- Keep the group to a manageable size, no more than 15 per training.
- Prepare all the sessions. Study your information and make sure you have all the facts in order.
- Organise the room so that it is conducive to learning. The light, temperature and position of the chairs and tables are important.
- Make sure the audio-visual equipment works before you start the session.
- In group discussions make sure everyone has a chance to speak and be heard. You may have to call on people to get them to talk. Others who talk too much may need to be reminded to keep their response short in order to give others a chance to speak.
- Summarise key points from discussions by writing them on a flip chart.
- Observe the non-verbal clues of the group. If they look tired, take a short stretch break. If they are daydreaming, get them active.
- If the discussions get heated, ask the parties to be respectful of each other and the group. If that doesn't work call a break until things cool down.
- Use role-plays and case studies to actively involve the participants.
- Keep on schedule. Ask people to arrive promptly for each session and from breaks. There is a lot of information to cover.
- **REMEMBER:** For many employees, the topics are new and they may feel uncomfortable or embarrassed at the start of training. Allow people time to get comfortable with the content.

What Peer Educators Need to Know

- The role of the peer educator
- How to present to a group
- Places to refer people for legal, medical, and counselling services
- How to communicate effectively with peers
- How to promote positive behaviours with regard to HIV/AIDS
- HIV: transmission, prevention, how the virus affects the body
- The relationship between HIV and TB
- The steps and benefits involved with HIV testing
- Confidentiality of a person's HIV status, especially in the workplace
- Availability of HIV treatments in Namibia
- The benefits of a peer education programme