

Why this Course is Needed

Good nutrition is an fundamental part of the care for people living with HIV/AIDS and is one of the simplest means to help people live longer and more productive lives. The majority of the people with HIV/AIDS live in countries where health care, resources and drugs are scarce. For them, good nutrition is a positive way to respond to the illness.

Good nutrition is important to everyone. It can boost the immune system and energy levels. It can help maintain body weight and support the effective action of drug treatments. A person who is well nourished is stronger and better able to fight infections. This is true not just for people with HIV infection but is especially important for people living with HIV/AIDS who are more susceptible to recurring infections.

A person may have some choice or control about what they eat, so questions about food and eating are asked often. This course aims to help participants answer some of those questions.

Food is not a magic bullet. It will not stop people dying of AIDS. However, it can help people to live longer, be more comfortable and lead lives that are more productive.

For further information, contact

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A Course Director's Guide is available to assist with the planning of the course.

Nutritional Care and Support for People Living with HIV/AIDS - a training course

This course is for caregivers of people living with HIV/AIDS, working in the community or attached to hospitals, whose activities may include providing general nutrition information, care and support to individuals or groups. It may also be used in the pre-service training of health workers.



Care and support are provided by a variety of people including family members, nurses, doctors, dietitians, other health workers, volunteers, community workers and others. In this course we refer to these various people as caregivers.

Course Aims

The first aim of this course is that caregivers for PLWHA and their families will have more knowledge about practical nutrition care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS. It is not enough to know about the theory of nutrition. It is also necessary to be able to suggest ways to choose foods, to prepare them and to eat them, particularly when people are ill or their appetite is poor.

Therefore, the second aim of this course is to help course participants understand the importance of communication skills when working with people. These skills help to listen to the person and to suggest practical nutrition measures relevant to that individual.

This combination of knowledge and communication skills helps the person to have as high a standard of nutrition and the best quality of life that is possible for them.

The information in this course can be used by the participants in a one-to-one discussion; when talking to a group of people; to share information and skills with work colleagues; as well as to help themselves or a family member.

Course Materials include a Course Directors Guide, a Facilitators Guide, Overhead Transparencies, a Participants Manual, Worksheets and Key Points charts.

Course Outline

The *Nutrition Care and Support for people Living with HIV/AIDS* training can be used as a complete course, which will take about 10-12 hours, not including meal breaks. Or the sessions can be used one by one. They vary in length from 30 minutes to 90 minutes.

There are 11 sessions plus an opening and closing session. There is also a short optional session providing a general introduction to HIV/AIDS. The sessions use a variety of teaching methods, including lectures, demonstrations, role-play, and exercises. The course is classroom based.

The course participants are assumed to have moderate literacy skills, an awareness of general information on HIV/AIDS such as modes of transmission, local availability of counselling and testing, awareness of communication skills and be comfortable working with people living with HIV/AIDS. Participants are expected to have little or no specific training in nutrition.

If participants have lower literacy or little experience of classroom work, if they need additional knowledge on HIV/AIDS in general or more skills of counselling, the course may need to extend over more days to allow more time for discussion of new and additional information.

Session Titles:

Nutrition and HIV/AIDS

Introduction to Communication Skills

Eating Wisely

Nutrition during Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

HIV and Infant Feeding

Weight and Activity

Improving Food Intake

Feeding a Child Living with HIV/AIDS

Medicine, Myths and Magic

Improving Access to Food

Course Review

This course includes basic information on communication skills. However it is not designed to train people to be HIV counsellors.

The nutrition information provided is at a general level. People with complex nutrition related concerns and/or co-morbidities such as diabetes, altered lipid levels and other conditions will need to be referred to someone with more extensive training in nutrition.