

Tri-County Collaboration Project

## Service Needs of HIV Positive Women

Barbara Newlin, MSN, ARNP   James Berghuis, PhD   Victoria Harris, MD, MPH

[Background](#)  
[Setting](#)

[Results](#)  
[Discussion](#)

### Background

Women with HIV infection have multiple service needs. Many HIV positive women are multiply affected with mental illness and/or substance abuse. It is hypothesized that service needs include primary health care, help with medication adherence, case management (including help with housing, insurance, financial aid, care of children, etc.), mental health care, and substance abuse counseling. However, in the context of a primary care outpatient clinic, what broad categories of need arise?

### Setting

The Northwest Family Center (NWFC) is a collaborative program of the Seattle-King County Health Department, Children's Hospital and Medical Center, People of Color Against AIDS Network, and the University of Washington Medical Center. The purpose of the NWFC is to provide comprehensive, family centered, culturally sensitive services for HIV infected women, children and their families, all in one place. The clinic provides case management, chemical dependency counseling, psychiatric services and primary health care in the same agency (at Harborview Medical Center). The Tri-County Collaboration Project outposts a nurse practitioner (ARNP) to provide primary medical care to clients at NWFC one-half day per week.

### Results

From 1/1/98 to 6/30/98 the ARNP provided services to 16 women in 48 visits:

- **70%** of clients were African American, mean age 35
- **70%** diagnosed mental illness
- **13%** current substance abuse
- **56%** HAART (highly active antiretroviral treatment)
- **88%** compliant with medical treatment

### Discussion

This descriptive information suggests that women seen at NWFC are likely to have multiple diagnoses and require sensitivity to a non-Caucasian culture. Comparatively, it is likely that the presence of a mental illness has more effect on the likelihood of being on triple-combination therapy than the presence of current substance abuse. Nonetheless, women on HAART protocols were highly compliant with medical treatment when seen in an agency offering multiple services in a culturally sensitive environment.