The Development of a Web-Based Program to Improve Adherence to HIV/AIDS Medications among Drug Abusers in a Community Clinic

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Intersection of Technology, HAART
Adherence, and Drug Abuse Treatment
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About ISA…

- Health R&D company, established 1978
- Specializing in developing and testing web-based behavioral health interventions
- Engaged in multiple projects addressing drug use and HIV
Overview of the Project

- **Purpose**: To develop and test a web-based program designed to *improve medication adherence and reduce stress* among HIV patients.

- **Test Site**: Whitman Walker Clinic, a large community clinic in Washington, DC.

- **Sample**: 200 HIV+ patients (50% drug users) prescribed HAART medications.

- **Design**: An RCT, with data collection at baseline and three posttests at 3, 6 and 9 months.

- **Outcome Measures**: Self-reports of stress, drug use and medication adherence; MEMS caps; viral loads.
Challenges & Approaches

- **Recruitment of high-risk, low income Ss**
  - Incentives -- $125 or equivalent
  - On-site Research Analyst
  - Assistance of clinic staff (subcontractor)

- **Access to the web-based program**
  - Two dedicated laptops at the clinic
  - RA to assist with accessing the program

- **Retention**
  - Incentives ($$)
  - Emails, postcards, phone calls
The Project Team

- **ISA:** Royer Cook, Rebekah Hersch, Doug Billings, Samantha Leaf
- **Consultants:** Steve Safren, Harvard; David Murray, Ohio State
- **Collaborators/Subcontractors:** Whitman Walker Clinic (Justin Goforth); Redmon Group (technical programming)
The Web-Based Intervention:

**Life Steps** for managing medications and stress

*Life Steps* combines a web-based stress management program with a web-based version of an in-person cognitive behavioral HIV medication adherence program, developed by Steve Safren.

*Life Steps* is a multi-media program with interactive exercises and downloadable segments and forms.
Life Steps Outline

- **Medication Adherence**
  - Understanding Medication Adherence, Getting To Appointments, Communicating with Your Treatment Team, Coping with Side Effects, Obtaining Mediations, Formulating a Daily Medication Schedule, Storing Medications, Using Cue Control Strategies, & Handling Slips

- **Stress and HIV**
  - Review of Medication Adherence, HIV-Stress Relationship, & The Stress Response

- **Assess Your Stress**
  - Review of Medication Adherence, Assessing Your Stress, & Identifying Stressors

- **Stress Management Strategies**
  - Review of Medication Adherence, Avoid Negative Coping (focused on alcohol and drugs), & Make Positive Choices
Further Questions about *Life Steps*

*For questions about this project please contact:*

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Program Demonstration

Life Steps for Managing Medications and Stress Management