Do you speak U=U?

Talking to patients about treatment as prevention

Matthew Hodson
Executive Director, NAM / aidsmap
BHIVA Autumn Conference
Good news

Reduction in HIV diagnoses

London hits 90-90-90

Equal life-expectancy

plus Marriage equality coming to Australia
#UequalsU

“As the UK’s leading voice for HIV health professionals, our backing for U=U is unequivocal.”
Do you tell all of your HIV+ patients about TaP / U=U?

- Yes all of them
- Sometimes (time constraints)
- Sometimes (depends on the patient)
- Sometimes (other reason)
- Never
Messaging about TaP

2001 Gay Men Fighting AIDS campaign included the following:

“If you are HIV positive, and have sex without a condom, there is less chance of passing on HIV if…

• You have a low viral load”

October 2001
The ‘Swiss Statement’

People with HIV are not sexually infectious (‘ne transmettent pas le VIH par voie sexuelle’), as long as the following conditions are met:

• The HIV-positive individual takes antiretroviral therapy consistently and as prescribed and is regularly followed by his/her doctor.

• Viral load is 'undetectable' and has been so for at least six months.

• The HIV-positive individual does not have any STIs

January 2008
BHIVA discussion of Swiss Statement

“Never say never.”

“Grieving process.”

“Muddying of prevention messages.”

October 2008
HPTN 052 study reported at IAS

Reported 96% reduction in risk.

“These are important results to give to a serodiscordant couple.”

Standing ovation

July 2011
PARTNER study (1st 2 years), CROI

No transmissions occurred despite quite high levels of STIs.

"Our best estimate is it's zero."

March 2014
“We can fairly safely say that the chance of transmission from a virally-suppressed HIV-positive person during heterosexual sex is negligible.”
“This is demolishing HIV stigma and encouraging people to start treatment and bring an end to the epidemic.”

U=U activism

Consensus statement signed by IAS
Consensus statement on TaP:

People living with HIV on ART with an undetectable viral load in their blood have a negligible risk of sexual transmission of HIV.

Depending on the drugs employed it may take as long as six months for the viral load to become undetectable.

Continued and reliable HIV suppression requires selection of appropriate agents and excellent adherence to treatment.

HIV viral suppression should be monitored to assure both personal health and public health benefits.
#UequalsU

“The scientific evidence is clear. Someone whose HIV is undetectable does not pose an infection risk to their sexual partners.”

For information on HIVyou can rely on: www.aidsmap.com

U=U Undetectable Equals Untransmittable
90% reduction in HIV diagnoses at 56 Dean Street

"Viral undetectability is an urgently desired status and doctors should use that as a motivation for treatment."

Gus Cairns
Everyone wins

U=U may:
• Reduce HIV related stigma
• Improve mental / emotional health for people living with HIV
• Reduce barriers to testing
• Reduce time between infection and diagnosis
• Prevent new infections.
"Having sex with someone who is living with the virus is not as dangerous as you think.

“I believe it's an ethical requirement to tell your patients this.

“The risk is so low that to tell patients they must use a condom without telling them that there is virtually no evidence to support this statement is unethical."

Pietro Vernazza
co-author of ‘The Swiss Statement’
UNDETECTABLE = UNTRANSMITTABLE

www.uequalsu.org
#UequalsU
Thank you

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