

Welcome to Clinical Management of HIV

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Welcome to the Clinical Management of HIV course from the University of Washington. I'm an infectious diseases and HIV physician. My experience in clinical HIV includes work in different parts of the US (namely, Seattle, New York, and Boston), as well as Uganda and Peru. My work is based primarily in Lima, Peru, where I do research in partnership with clinical- and community-based organizations aimed at supporting engagement in HIV testing, prevention, and linkage to care among diverse populations.

Throughout the ten weeks of this course, we are fortunate to be joined by many guest lecturers from across the world, all of whom are experienced HIV clinicians and educators.

These lecturers were selected not only for their specific expertise in one or more topic areas relevant to clinical HIV, but also for the diversity of experiences and clinical perspectives they are able to provide based on their work in a range of different healthcare settings and regional contexts globally. They represent a number of different countries, including India, Jamaica, Kenya, Nigeria, Peru, South Africa, Uganda, and the U.S.

In addition, they come from a variety of professional backgrounds with training in clinical medicine and public health, including specialists in Adolescent Medicine, Dermatology, Hematology/Oncology, Maternal/Child health, and Pediatrics.

We designed the course with you in mind—healthcare professionals from over 30 countries throughout the world. As you interact with your classmates at your sites, as well as in the weekly discussion forums, you will likely meet colleagues from a wide range of professional backgrounds, including physicians, nurses, pharmacists, students, and other clinical trainees. In addition to what you learn from the lectures and readings, there is also much to be learned from your fellow students!

We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to share your experiences and connect with colleagues from around the world by participating in the weekly Discussion Boards. It is our hope that, as part of this course, students will gain a broader understanding of how clinicians manage common challenges and situations faced by HIV practitioners in a multitude of countries.

In each of the course's 10 modules, you will watch lectures delivered by HIV experts on key topics within that week's area of focus. You will also complete weekly homework assignments; these include readings that are often from the U.S. National HIV Curriculum, which is an open online resource housed at the University of Washington.

For most readings, there will also be an associated Homework "Quiz" consisting of 2-4 questions.

These Homework quizzes can be taken multiple times if you aren't satisfied with your initial score.

Finally, each module has an end-of-module Quiz. These are designed to test key knowledge and concepts covered specifically in the lecture videos. The end-of-module quizzes can only be taken twice.

As I mentioned earlier, we also have an optional—but highly encouraged—weekly Discussion Forum where you can ask questions about the material covered in each module.

A new forum opens every week, tied to that week's topic. To help keep the conversations focused and useful for everyone, please try to post questions that relate to the module we're currently on. If you have a question about something coming up in a later module, it's best to hold onto it and post once we reach that topic.

And one more important note: if you share information on the Discussion Board, please cite your sources and make sure what you're posting is accurate. This is especially important if you've used AI tools to help draft or summarize anything—always double-check the facts before posting. This helps maintain the integrity of the discussion and keeps it beneficial for the whole group.

Key topics covered in this course include the global epidemiology of HIV; antiretroviral therapy, including monitoring and complications of ART; the continuum of HIV testing, prevention, and care; opportunistic infections and co-morbidities, including tuberculosis, other important sexually transmitted infections, and the growing burden of chronic non-communicable diseases among people living with HIV. We also cover specific considerations relevant to providing high-quality, person-centered care for special and key populations.

Each year for this course, we undertake an extensive review process to ensure that the lectures, assigned readings, and other course material are updated where necessary, to keep things as current as possible.

However, given the continuously evolving nature of the HIV field, the lectures you watch as part of this course will only reflect information or changes that may be made to the clinical guidelines as of the start of the current course. Should there be any cases over the next 10 weeks in which particularly important or relevant new information has come to light about a certain topic or guideline, we will aim to share this with students in real time via the course platform—either as an Announcement message or by posting in the Discussion Forum.

Likewise, if you notice any information that needs updating, please communicate this to our team via the discussion board or via email. We are always happy to hear from you and we welcome your feedback.

In developing this course, one of our goals is to provide students with a truly global perspective, so that you can learn about the similarities and differences in how HIV is managed across different parts of the world—including in highly-resourced settings as well as more resource-limited settings.

Given the global scope of the HIV pandemic, as well as the diversity of countries and regional settings represented by you, the students who have come to take this course, we focus on the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines as our primary source of clinical recommendations. These have the broadest applicability for patients and providers worldwide, and for those in low- and middle-income countries where the greatest HIV burden is most concentrated.

At the same time, there's real value in understanding how HIV is managed in more highly resourced settings like the United States, where newer medications and interventions are often more likely to be available, and where clinicians can monitor patients more closely.

For that reason, we also highlight current U.S. guidelines so you can see how care is delivered across different contexts and have that broader perspective. One way we do this is through the readings, many of which come directly from the U.S. National HIV Curriculum. You may find that some aspects of this U.S.-focused resource are less applicable to your setting, or are not in line with the WHO guidelines.

In most situations, the WHO and U.S. recommendations are the same or very similar, but in those specific cases where they differ, we'll try to point this out.

In many settings, there are also regional or country-level guidelines and practice standards that may not always align 100% with what WHO or other international guidelines have to say.

Although there are a few exceptions, in general in this course we do not go into local or country-level guidelines. So this can sometimes be a source of differences between what students observe in their own local HIV care settings and what is being taught in the course.

We want to set clear expectations for students at the onset of this course: the intention of this course is not to prepare you to diagnose or treat patients. We expect that you, as a healthcare professional, have already completed or are currently enrolled in a formal training program for your profession, and that formal training should inform the basis and scope of your clinical activities.

Rather, the purpose of the course is to give you a broad overview and introduction to the diagnosis, prevention, and management of HIV in different settings globally. We hope that exploring the viewpoints shared by the HIV experts in this course alongside those of your colleagues enrolled in the course will prepare you to provide excellent, patient-centered, and evidence-based care to people who are affected by or living with HIV around the world.

By the end of this 10-week course, we hope that you feel comfortable and confident as a clinical resource—for both your patients and other providers—based on the knowledge you gain. With that said, welcome to Clinical Management of HIV, and I wish you a fulfilling 10 week.

