OPTIONS AGYW Training Package

Attachment 3: Exploring Our Values

The purpose of this activity is to give health care providers an opportunity to:

* Explore their own personal views and values concerning AGYW and PrEP.
* Gain insight into how personal views and values influence the way we relate and respond to different clients.
* Understand the importance of separating one’s personal views and values from rendering quality health care.

**Note:** This exercise is sometimes known as a “values clarification” exercise. It is a process whereby people are encouraged to reflect on their own values, see different ways of viewing the same issue, and possibly learn about new perspectives and change their views. However, we prefer not to call it a values clarification exercise, as this terminology often implies we are going to clarify participants’ values, and this may cause negativity and resistance to the process.

**PART 1:**

* Prepare three signs on large handwritten cards or A4 pages, each with one of the following written on it: 1) agree, 2) disagree, and 3) uncertain. Place the signs around the room (spacing determined by the number of participants; the more participants, the wider the space between the signs). If the group is too large, the room too small, or the time too short, skip this step.
* Read a statement, and ask participants to place themselves alongside the sign that reflects whether they agree, disagree, or are not sure. If you were not able to make the signs, ask those who agree to stand up, those who disagree to raise their hand, and those who are uncertain to fold their arms.
* Then get feedback from different people with different views. Each statement is controversial and may provoke a debate. It’s important not to get stuck in a detailed discussion but to get a spectrum of views and then move on to the next statement.
* Facilitate participation, try and get a spread of views, and ensure that all are given the chance to speak at some point during the activity.
* If the discussion gets heated, request that participants listen to one another respectfully and think about different points of view.
* Do not worry if it gets rowdy and noisy as participants voice their opinions and argue their points of view.
* The statements move from general rights-based statements, to those pertaining to adolescents and young people, and finally to those related to PrEP and HIV.

**Select some of the following statements (feel free to add your own)**:

* In some countries (like South Africa), corporal punishment at schools (e.g., caning, smacking kids) is illegal. Do you agree with this?
* Sexuality education encourages young people to have sex.
* Sex work should be decriminalised and, even better, legalised.
* Women who wear miniskirts and revealing clothes are asking to be raped.
* Rape cannot happen in a marriage (between a husband and his wife).
* Adolescent girls should not be sexually active until they are 18 or older. Therefore, we should encourage abstinence.
* PrEP will give young people a false sense of security and encourage young people to not use condoms.
* Adolescent girls are irresponsible and forgetful and are not good candidates for PrEP. We should therefore focus only on condom use as a prevention strategy for young people.
* Parental consent should be required for young people to use PrEP.
* Adolescent girls are not responsible enough to take the PrEP pill daily, so PrEP should only be given to young people over the age of 18.
* Young women do not need to tell their male partners they are using PrEP.
* Partners of AGYW will not be supportive of them using PrEP, so they should consider other HIV prevention options.
* Women in abusive or controlling relationships are at higher risk of HIV, so it is important that they know about PrEP as an HIV prevention option.
* PrEP will just encourage promiscuity and carelessness, so it is better if people practice safer sex, use condoms, and be monogamous rather than use PrEP.
* Using PrEP is safe for pregnant women.
* It is my responsibility as a health care provider to offer PrEP to adolescent girls and young women, regardless of my personal views.

**The activity raises the following key points:**

* We all have different values and views. This particularly pertains to AGYW, SRH, and HIV.
* It is important to explore and be aware of our own personal views and values, as these will influence the services we provide. Values can influence our non-verbal and verbal communication (e.g., our facial expressions, our tone of voice, whether we come across as judgmental).
* After the session, go through each statement and highlight the rights and issues underpinning the statements.
* Move on to explore how health care providers feel about PrEP generally, and then PrEP in relation to AGYW.
* Note how important it is to separate our own personal beliefs and values from our professional role as healthcare providers.

**PART 2: Comfort continuum**

**Note:** This activity is repeated as part of Attachment 3. Either do it here or do it as part of the that attachment (related to risk assessment).

* Place three signs on the wall/floor: 1) uncomfortable, 2) comfortable, and 3) uncertain.
* Read an attitude statement (see below), and ask participants to place themselves along the comfort continuum according to how comfortable they are with the statement.

**Attitudes toward PrEP as an HIV prevention tool:**

* I am comfortable with my sexual partner taking PrEP.
* I would take PrEP to help prevent myself from getting infected with HIV.
* I would find it easy to talk to my partner about my taking PrEP.

**Attitudes toward providing SRH and PrEP to AGYW:**

* I am comfortable providing SRH services like PrEP, condoms, and contraceptives to a 15-year-old girl who has many sexual partners.
* I would allow my teenage daughter (whether I have one or not) to take PrEP to prevent HIV.

**Our personal feelings and comfort levels**

* How do you personally feel about taking PrEP?
* How do you honestly feel about providing services to sexually active AGYW? How does this affect AGYW positively or negatively?

**Group discussion**

* Explore similarities, differences, reasons for how the exercise questions were answered, and how hard it can be to acknowledge our discomfort and misgivings.
* Ask the participants what the take-home message are from the activity. Wrap up by ensuring that the following points are covered:
  + Our personal views and values affect our communication and the services we provide.
  + We need to be aware of how our values affect the way we relate to our clients.

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