“Serostatus Matters” Teaches Primary Care Docs About HIV Testing

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A video-based program called “Serostatus Matters” will build the skills and confidence of primary care physicians around the topic of HIV testing.

Launched by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Tufts University School of Medicine, “Serostatus Matters” is a free, medical educational program whose goal is to improve physician-patient interactions during HIV testing. According to an AIDS.gov blog on the program, the videos are broken down into four topics:

- The importance of routine HIV screening
- Practical considerations for HIV screening implementation in the primary care clinician’s practice
- Communicating test results with patients
- Counseling the HIV-infected patient

In each of these scenarios, according to the blog post, “physician-patient vignettes model discussions of these topics with patients of different ethnicities and sexual preferences, and with different HIV test results (HIV-positive, indeterminate, and HIV-negative with a high risk for infection).”

It’s important for primary care doctors to feel comfortable and be knowledgeable during HIV screenings—and to be motivated to test for HIV in the first place—because more than 90 percent of new infections in the United States could be prevented by testing and then connecting people to care when they are diagnosed with HIV.

“Serostatus Matters” is part of the CDC campaign “HIV Screening. Standard Care,” which falls under the CDC’s Act Against AIDS umbrella of programs and campaigns.

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