

APPLYING CHTC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Part 1

Rose and Dumisani have come to the health facility for CHTC after being advised by the ANC nurse. Margaret is the provider who will be conducting the CHTC session today. When Rose and Dumisani arrive in the counseling room, Margaret acknowledges the couple. She notices that Dumisani is a young handsome man, and Rose is nearing the end of her pregnancy. She assumes that they are not having sex because Rose is so far along in her pregnancy. She then assumes that Dumisani must be having an affair and sleeping with other women in the community. Margaret's own husband left her when she was 6 months pregnant, and although that was 4 years ago, she has never gotten over this loss.

- ✓ What communication skill is needed here?

Part 2

Margaret asks Rose why she has come to receive CHTC today. When Rose responds, Margaret continues to ask her about her pregnancy, her relationship with Dumisani, her work and family life, and her thoughts about receiving CHTC today. Margaret does not acknowledge Dumisani, but does watch him out of the corner of her eye as he squirms when Rose answers some difficult questions.

- ✓ What communication skill does Margaret need right now?

Part 3

Margaret proceeds with the HIV test for the couple. As the test results are developing, she asks Dumisani about his work. When he responds that he works and lives away from home 3 weeks per month, she rolls her eyes and says, “typical African man.” This upsets Dumisani, and he looks at Rose for help. Rose sits calmly and touches Dumisani’s hand, but she does not say anything.

- ✓ What communication skills would have been helpful to Margaret in this situation?

Part 4

When the test results are ready, Margaret gives Rose her results first. She is HIV-positive. She then tells Dumisani that he is also HIV-positive. She explains how difficult their life will be from now on, since they will have to be on treatment for the rest of their lives. She says that she is very sorry this happened to them and notes that this is very common for couples in which the man works away from home.

Dumisani feels like Margaret is blaming him for bringing HIV into his family and starts to get angry with Margaret. Rather than calming him down or alleviating the tension in the room, Margaret tells them that there is another room they should go to for care and treatment and sends them back to the receptionist to tell them where to go.

- ✓ What communication skills does Margaret lack in this situation?

- ✓ How should Margaret have done things differently to model good CHTC communication skills?
