

Implementing HIV Testing in Nonclinical Settings

A Guide for HIV Testing Providers

Script for Testing Together

The following scripts are provided to accompany the Implementation Guide. The scripts can be printed double-sided and then studied before and after conducting an HIV testing session with clients. Scripts contain sample language that an HIV testing provider might use to perform each task within the steps of the HIV testing protocol. However, this language should be adapted by the provider so that he or she is comfortable and the words sound natural. It is not advised that providers read the scripts to clients, but rather use them as a reference, as needed. This script has been provided for the Rapid HIV Testing scenario, and may be adapted for Instant or Nonrapid HIV testing scenarios if needed.

- SCRIPT—Rapid HIV Testing for Testing Together

1	Introduce Testing Together and Obtain Concurrence
2	Prepare For and Conduct Rapid HIV Test <i>(10-20 minute read time)</i>
3	Explore Couple's Relationship
4	Discuss HIV Risk Concerns and Reasons for Seeking Testing Together
5	Discuss Couple's Agreement
6	Provide Initial Results and Follow Protocol for Confirmatory Test
7	Develop Care, Treatment, and Prevention Plan Based on Results
8	Refer and Link with Medical Care, Social and Behavioral Services

Testing Together *Rapid* HIV Testing Scripts: What to Say and Do for Each Step of the Protocol



STEP 1: Introduce Testing Together and Obtain Concurrence	
<p><u>Task 1:</u> Introduce yourself and describe your role.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello, my name is _____, and I will be conducting your Testing Together session today.
<p><u>Task 2:</u> Explain Testing Together and discuss benefits.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am happy to see that you have come in together for HIV testing. • There are many important benefits associated with receiving HIV Testing Together. • Getting tested together allows you to both learn your HIV test results at the same time. • You don't have to talk about past risk in this session today, we'll stay focused on the present and the future. • You can both learn important information about HIV, and can make decisions together about how to deal with HIV in your lives.
<p><u>Task 3:</u> Describe conditions for receiving Testing Together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners agree to discuss HIV risk issues and concerns together. • Partners are willing to receive results together. • Partners commit to shared confidentiality • Partners agree to make disclosure decisions together. 	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to get the most out of this Testing Together session, it is important that you both agree to a few conditions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First, I need to know that both of you agree to discuss your HIV risk issues and concerns about HIV. I want both of you to feel comfortable expressing your concerns about HIV and getting tested. ○ Second, an important part of getting tested together is receiving your results together. This means that you will know the HIV status of your partner as well as yourself. I need for both of you to agree to receive your results together. ○ Next, I need you to agree to a shared confidentiality. This means your results will only be shared with the two of you, and me as your HIV testing provider. ○ Finally, because you will know each other's HIV status at the end of this session, I need you both to agree to be mindful of how you share your result and the result of your partner. I would like for you to agree that you will not tell anyone else unless you both agree to tell that person. I would also like for you to agree that you will make decisions together about sharing your test results with other people. • Do you have any questions about these conditions? • Can you agree to these conditions?

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STEP 1: Introduce Testing Together and Obtain Concurrence	
<p><u>Task 4:</u> Address roles and responsibilities of the partners.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before we get into the session, I would also like to talk about what is expected of you as individuals and as partners during the Testing Together session. • Some partners find it helpful to establish ground rules for how the session will be conducted, so that we're all in agreement about how to move forward. • Some examples of ground rules that other partners have found helpful are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participate equally in the discussion. ○ Listen carefully and respond to one another. ○ Treat each other with respect and dignity. ○ Be as open and honest as possible. ○ Provide understanding and support to one another. • What expectations do you have for how the session should be conducted? • Can you agree to the ground rules I mentioned? • Are there any ground rules you would like to establish before we move on with the session?
<p><u>Task 5:</u> Provide session overview.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's talk a little about how the session will proceed. • Once you're ready, I will explain the process of conducting the rapid HIV test. Then I will collect the sample so that the test can develop while we continue with the session. • As the test is developing, we will talk a little bit about your relationship so that I can better understand what brought you in for HIV Testing Together. • We will talk about your HIV risk issues and concerns, and then we will spend some time talking about your relationship agreements. • The HIV test results should be ready at that time, and I will give you both your HIV test results together. We will discuss your results, establish a plan for your next steps, and I will answer any questions you have. • The entire session should take between 30-45 minutes. • Do you have any questions about the session?
<p><u>Task 6:</u> Obtain concurrence to receive Testing Together.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We've talked about the conditions for receiving Testing Together, we've talked about your roles and responsibilities, and you have an idea of what the session is going to look like. Are you ready to begin the session? • Are both of you comfortable with what I have said so far, and are you interested in continuing with the session? <p><i>If yes, proceed. If no, discuss individual HIV testing.</i></p>

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STEP 2: Prepare for and Conduct Rapid HIV Test (10-20 minute read time)	
<p><u>Task 1:</u> Explain process of conducting rapid HIV test.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As I mentioned, we are going to start by conducting the rapid HIV test, so that the test may develop while we proceed with the rest of the session. • Let’s talk for a minute about the HIV testing process. <p><i>Explain how you will conduct the HIV rapid test, based on your agency’s protocols. Adapt and/or move this step as needed to align with your agency’s HIV testing algorithm.</i></p>
<p><u>Task 2:</u> Explain meaning of positive and negative results, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for confirmatory test if positive. • Need for re-testing if negative. 	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each of you will have your own HIV test result. This result may be either HIV-positive, or HIV-negative. • An HIV-positive test result means the test has detected HIV-antibodies in your body. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The tests we use are extremely accurate, which means it is highly likely that you have HIV if the test comes back HIV-positive. ○ However, to be sure that this is correct, we will collect another sample for a confirmatory test. The results of this confirmatory test will be available in ____ days. • If your test result is HIV-negative, this means that the test did not detect HIV-antibodies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HIV tests are accurate, but they are not able to detect HIV-antibodies if you were infected very recently. ○ We let all HIV-negative partners s know that if either of you had a recent exposure, you should be re-tested in ____ weeks to be sure the results are truly negative. ○ Because most partners that get tested together are interested in doing what is most safe for themselves and their partner, they generally decide to use protection during those ____ weeks until they can be re-tested.
<p><u>Task 3:</u> Explain possible results for partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both may be HIV-negative. • Both may be HIV-positive. • One may be HIV-positive and the other may be HIV-negative. 	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just like each of you will have your own HIV test result, you will also have a test result as partners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is possible that both of you will be HIV-negative. ○ It is also possible that both of you will be HIV-positive. ○ Finally, it is possible that one of you will be HIV-positive and one of you will be HIV-negative. • Couples frequently receive different HIV test results – where one is HIV-positive and the other is HIV-negative. This happens even when partners have been together for many years, or even when they have children together. • There are many factors that can cause partners to have different HIV test results. • Do you have any questions about the types of test results you may receive today?

Testing Together *Rapid* HIV Testing Scripts: What to Say and Do for Each Step of the Protocol

STEP 2: Prepare for and Conduct Rapid HIV Test (10-20 minute read time)	
<u>Task 4:</u> Obtain consent to test (if required).	<u>Script:</u> <i>Obtain consent according to your state and/or agency specific policies and procedures.</i>
<u>Task 5:</u> Collect specimens and conduct rapid HIV test.	<u>Script:</u> <i>Collect specimens and conduct rapid HIV test according to your state and/or agency specific policies and procedures.</i>

STEP 3: Explore Couple's Relationship	
<u>Task 1:</u> Establish nature and duration of the couple's relationship.	<u>Script:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As we wait for the test to develop, I would like to talk about your relationship. • Can you please tell me a little bit about your relationship? • When and how did you meet? • Do you live together now? • When you look ahead in this relationship, what do you envision?
<u>Task 2:</u> Summarize and reflect on the couple's history and their current situation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on strengths in the relationship. 	<u>Script:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let me make sure I understand your situation. <i>Summarize what the partners have told you about their history and current situation.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this correct?

Testing Together *Rapid* HIV Testing Scripts: What to Say and Do for Each Step of the Protocol



STEP 4:	
Discuss the Couple's HIV Risk Concerns and Reasons for Seeking Testing Together	
<p><u>Task 1:</u> Review how the partners decided to receive Testing Together.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you decide to come together for HIV testing today? • What brought you in to receive HIV testing services together today?
<p><u>Task 2:</u> Assess the partners' feelings associated with receiving Testing Together.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you both feel about getting tested for HIV and receiving your results together?
<p><u>Task 3:</u> Assess the partners' knowledge of HIV and how it is transmitted; when discussing HIV risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use abstract language. • Remind partners to focus on present and future. 	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me what you understand about HIV and how it is transmitted. <p><i>Correct any misinformation and ensure accurate understanding of HIV transmission and risk.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many people in our community have been affected by HIV. The most important thing is to know your HIV status and to take steps in the future to keep yourself healthy and to prevent transmission.
<p><u>Task 4:</u> Address indicators of increased risk in the partners' relationship.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As we talk about your HIV risk concerns, I want you to remember that it is important for us to stay focused on the present and your future, and to not blame each other for what might have occurred in the past. • What specific concerns do you have about HIV and your risk for HIV in your relationship? • Have either of you had any symptoms or illnesses that cause you to be concerned that you may have HIV?
<p><u>Task 5:</u> Summarize the discussion and provide motivation and support for addressing HIV risk issues.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let me summarize what we've discussed to make sure I understand you correctly. <p><i>Summarize what the partners have told you about their HIV risk issues and concerns and their reasons for seeking Testing Together.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this correct? • Is there anything else that I didn't mention that you would like to add?

STEP 5: Discuss Couple's Agreement	
<p><u>Task 1:</u> Explain concept of agreements in a couple's relationship.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many partners have agreements about how they have sex with each other, and with partners outside the relationship. • For example, some partners agree that they will only have sex with each other, while others might agree that they can have sex with partners outside the relationship. • Some partners might also have rules about how they can have sex with other people, like when, where, and how.
<p><u>Task 2:</u> Ask partners if they have an agreement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, encourage partners to describe what their agreement looks like; what are the terms of their agreement. • If no, encourage partners to talk about terms of an agreement they might like to have. 	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have an agreement like this in your relationship? <p><i>If yes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell me what your agreement looks like? What are the terms of your agreement? <p><i>If no:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's okay to not have an agreement. Many of partners haven't had explicit conversations about an agreement for their relationship. • However, a lot of partners also find it useful to develop an agreement, because they can help build trust and reduce risk. • What kind of agreement would you like to have for your relationship? What kind of terms would you like to establish for an agreement, if you were to put one in place? • Is this something you would like to define today? • It's okay if you do not come to a concrete agreement today. I just want to give you a framework for discussing agreements so that you have the skills to have these conversations on your own in the future.
<p><u>Task 3:</u> Note the relationship between agreement and HIV risk.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is great that you have an agreement and that you are both on the same page about what is allowed in your relationship and what is not. • When discussing your agreement, it is important to note what parts of the agreement support HIV risk reduction behaviors, and which parts of the agreement might lead to riskier behaviors. • My goal is not to tell you to change your agreement, but to support you to make decisions that will keep you healthy and prevent HIV transmission.

STEP 5: Discuss Couple's Agreement	
<p><u>Task 4:</u></p> <p>Engage partners in a role play around how they would like to find out if one partner violated the terms of the agreement.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some relationships, even though both partners are on the same page about the terms of their agreement, there comes a time when one or both partners break that agreement. • I'm not saying that will happen with you, but it is a reality for some couples. <p><i>Ask each partner in turn, starting with "Partner A":</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner A, if Partner B broke your agreement, would you want him (or her) to tell you about it? • Partner A, how would you want Partner B to tell you if he (or she) broke your agreement? When would you like to know, where would you like him (or her) to tell you, and how would you want him (or her) to say it? • Be as specific as you can – for example, after work or before work, on the weekend, at the kitchen table, etc. <p><i>Then ask "Partner B":</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner B, if Partner A broke your agreement, would you want him (or her) to tell you about it? • Partner B, how would you want Partner A to tell you if he (or she) broke your agreement? When would you like to know, where would you like him (or her) to tell you, and how would you want him (or her) to say it? <p><i>Note. The question can be tailored based on the specific agreement that the partners have discussed. The counselor might repeat part of the agreement that has been discussed, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You mentioned before that your agreement allows sex outside your relationship, but only if condoms are used. Partner A, if Partner B ever had sex outside your relationship without a condom, how would you want him to tell you about it?"
<p><u>Task 5:</u></p> <p>Summarize discussion and reinforce the couple's ability to talk openly about their agreement.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let me summarize what you've told me about your agreement so that we're all on the same page. <p><i>Summarize what the partners have told you about their agreement and how they would like to know if the agreement was violated.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this correct? • Is there anything else that I didn't mention that you would like to add?

Results Steps – Concordant HIV-Negative Partners

STEP 6:

Provide Initial Results and Follow Protocol for Confirmatory Test – CONCORDANT HIV-NEGATIVE PARTNERS

<p><u>Task 1:</u> Confirm readiness to receive results.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your HIV test results are ready. Are you ready to receive your results together?
<p><u>Task 2:</u> Provide clear explanation of results.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your HIV test results are the same. They are both HIV-negative. This means the tests did not detect HIV antibodies in either of you today. <p><i>Adapt messaging based on your agency's HIV testing algorithm and technology used.</i></p> <p><i>If available, show the test results or the test strips to the partners.</i></p>

STEP 7: Develop Care, Treatment, and Prevention Plan Based on Results – CONCORDANT HIV-NEGATIVE PARTNERS	
<p><u>Task 1:</u> Explore partners' reaction to results.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you understand your test results? • How do you feel, now that you've received these results? <p><i>If necessary, allow the partners a few moments of silence to absorb their HIV test results.</i></p>
<p><u>Task 2:</u> Advise on how to keep both partners HIV-negative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit sexual agreement and reinforce decisions that will help partners remain negative. • Emphasize condom use, reducing number outside partners and testing outside partners. • Discuss pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), as appropriate. 	<p><u>Script:</u> <i>Adapt this section based on what partners have already told you.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since you have both received HIV-negative test results, I would like to talk a little bit further about how to keep you both free from HIV. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We previously discussed your agreement about sex in your relationship and with outside partners. Now that we have more information, is there anything about that agreement that you would like to change? ○ As we discussed, using condoms with any outside partners is one of the most effective ways of preventing HIV transmission. ○ Many people also feel better about staying HIV-negative if they are able to reduce the number of outside partners they have. ○ If you do have outside partners, it is also important to know their HIV status. You may want to talk with them about getting tested together. <p><i>Adapt discussion of PrEP based on availability in your community.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There have also been recent advances in HIV prevention that I want to tell you about. Studies have shown that when HIV-negative persons take treatment – known as pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP – their chances of acquiring HIV are greatly reduced. ○ If you are interested in learning more about PrEP, I can refer you to a PrEP counselor or provider, who can answer your questions and give you a prescription.
<p><u>Task 3:</u> Discuss need for re-testing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If recent exposure, re-test in ____ weeks. • If no recent exposure, re-test in 6-12 months. 	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As we discussed at the beginning of this session, your HIV test results today are likely very accurate. • However, if either of you have had a recent exposure, you should be retested again in ____ weeks to be sure you are truly HIV-negative. Many partners want to be as safe as possible, and so they opt to get re-tested in ____ weeks to protect themselves and their partner. • If you haven't had a recent exposure, we recommend regular retesting every (6–12) months (<i>based on client's risk profile</i>). • These recommendations for re-testing are given to all partners who come in and test HIV-negative.

STEP 8:

Refer and Link with Medical Care, Social and Behavioral Services – CONCORDANT HIV-NEGATIVE PARTNERS

Task 1:

Link the partners with appropriate follow-up services based on their situation and needs, including:

- PrEP
- STI screening and/or treatment
- Behavioral interventions
- Reproductive health
- Re-testing for HIV
- Counseling for mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence

Script:

- Based on our discussions today, I would like to link you with the following follow-up services.

Adapt this section based on the couple's situation and needs.

Ensure that you are identifying and addressing any barriers the partners might have to seeking follow-up services, and that you are actively linking them with any necessary services by calling ahead, scheduling an appointment, or giving them the name of someone to talk to.

Results Steps – Concordant HIV-Positive Partners

STEP 6:

Provide Initial Results and Follow Protocol for Confirmatory Test – CONCORDANT HIV-POSITIVE PARTNERS

<p><u>Task 1:</u> Confirm readiness to receive results.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your HIV test results are ready. Are you ready to receive your results together?
<p><u>Task 2:</u> Provide clear explanation of results.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your HIV test results are the same. They are both HIV-positive. This means the test detected HIV antibodies in both of you today. <p><i>Adapt messaging based on your agency's HIV testing algorithm and technology used.</i></p> <p><i>If available, show the test results or the test strips to the partners.</i></p>

Testing Together *Rapid* HIV Testing Scripts: What to Say and Do for Each Step of the Protocol



STEP 7: Develop Care, Treatment, and Prevention Plan Based on Results – CONCORDANT HIV-POSITIVE PARTNERS	
<p><u>Task 1:</u> Explore the couple’s reaction to results.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you understand your test results? • How do you feel, now that you’ve received these results? <p><i>If necessary, allow the partners a few moments of silence to absorb their HIV test results.</i></p>
<p><u>Task 2:</u> Encourage mutual support and diffuse blame.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand it can be very hard to receive an HIV-positive test result. • You will probably have many strong feelings about your HIV status and about each other. These feelings are normal, and in time they will get easier to deal with. • You came here today to deal with HIV together. I really want to encourage you to focus now on how you can support each other to get through this tough time. • Remember that HIV infection could have happened at any time. It is difficult to know when and where it came from. The most important thing now is to focus on how to keep you both healthy. • Partner A, why don’t you tell Partner B how you’re feeling right now? • Partner B, can you tell partner A how you’re feeling right now? • Remember that you have dealt with difficult situations in the past, and you’re going to get through this. It may take some time to adjust to this new information, but in time, and with each other’s support, you will learn to cope and continue living positively together. • There is a lot we have to talk about, but first, do you have any questions?
<p><u>Task 3:</u> Advise to access care and treatment for HIV.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment can prevent transmission and help people with HIV live longer. • Other health issues can be discussed with HIV care provider to keep the partners healthy. 	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even though your results are HIV-positive, this does not mean that you have AIDS or that you’re going to become sick right away. • Remember that although these tests are very accurate, we are going to do a confirmatory test for HIV – the results from this test will be available in ____ days. • There is treatment for HIV that can help you live long, healthy, productive lives. Being on treatment also prevents the spread of HIV to partners who are not infected. • When you’re ready, we’ll get you linked with a health care provider who will work with you to determine which treatments are right for you, and when you should begin taking them. • I know it may seem like a lot to take in, but getting linked with care and treatment is one of the most important things you can do to take care of yourself and each other right now. • What questions do you have about HIV care and treatment?

Testing Together *Rapid* HIV Testing Scripts: What to Say and Do for Each Step of the Protocol



STEP 7: Develop Care, Treatment, and Prevention Plan Based on Results – CONCORDANT HIV-POSITIVE PARTNERS	
<p><u>Task 4:</u> Advise on how to prevent HIV transmission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit sexual agreement and reinforce decisions that will prevent transmission. • Emphasize condom use, reducing number outside partners and testing outside partners. • Encourage outside partners to be tested. 	<p><u>Script:</u> <i>Adapt this section based on what the partners have already told you.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We previously discussed your agreement about sex in your relationship and with outside partners. Now that we have more information, is there anything about that agreement that you would like to change? • I know this may be the last thing on your mind right now, but there are a few things I want to mention about preventing HIV transmission to other partners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As we discussed, using condoms with any outside partners is one of the most effective ways of preventing HIV transmission. ○ It can also be important to reduce the number of outside partners you have. ○ If you do have outside partners, it is also important to know their HIV status. You may want to talk with them about getting tested together.
<p><u>Task 5:</u> Discuss disclosure and getting support.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the beginning of the session, you both agreed to make decisions together regarding who to tell about your HIV test results. • Many couples find it helpful to identify a person or persons with whom they can share their HIV test results. • Are there any persons in your life that you would like to talk to about your HIV test results today? Who are these people? Do you both agree that these people would be helpful and supportive of you right now?
<p><u>Task 6:</u> Discuss pregnancy status and desires as needed.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u> <i>Adapt this section based on what the partners have already told you.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many options for partners living with HIV who would like to have children. Just because you have HIV does not mean you cannot have children. • I would encourage you to talk with your HIV care provider about your options, once you are ready.

Testing Together *Rapid* HIV Testing Scripts: What to Say and Do for Each Step of the Protocol

STEP 8:

Refer and Link with Medical Care, Social and Behavioral Services – CONCORDANT HIV-POSITIVE PARTNERS

Task 1:

Link the partners with appropriate follow-up services based on their situation and needs, including:

- HIV care and treatment
- STI screening and/or treatment
- TB screening
- Partner services
- Behavioral interventions
- Reproductive health
- Counseling for mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence

Script:

- Based on our discussions today, I would like to link you with the following follow-up services.

Adapt this section based on the couple's situation and needs.

Ensure that you are identifying and addressing any barriers the partners might have to seeking follow-up services, and that you are actively linking them with any necessary services by calling ahead, scheduling an appointment, or giving them the name of someone to talk to.

Results Steps – HIV-Discordant Partners

STEP 6:	
Provide Initial Results and Follow Protocol for Confirmatory Test – HIV-DISCORDANT PARTNERS	
<p><u>Task 1:</u> Confirm readiness to receive results.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your HIV test results are ready. Are you ready to receive your results together?
<p><u>Task 2:</u> Provide clear explanation of results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver HIV-positive test result first, then HIV-negative result. 	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your HIV test results are different. <i>To the HIV-positive partner:</i> Partner A, your test results are positive, which means your test today detected antibodies to HIV. We will need to do a second test to confirm this result. <i>To the HIV-negative partner:</i> Partner B, your test results are negative, which means your test today did not detect antibodies to HIV. However, because the tests can't detect infection if it occurred recently, we will want to make plans to re-test you. <p><i>Adapt messaging based on your agency's HIV testing algorithm and technology used.</i></p> <p><i>If available, show the test results or the test strips to the partners.</i></p>

Testing Together *Rapid* HIV Testing Scripts: What to Say and Do for Each Step of the Protocol

STEP 7: Develop Care, Treatment, and Prevention Plan Based on Results – HIV-DISCORDANT PARTNERS	
<p><u>Task 1:</u> Explore the couple’s reaction to results.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you understand your test results? • How do you feel, now that you’ve received these results? <p><i>If necessary, allow the partners a few moments of silence to absorb their HIV test results.</i></p>
<p><u>Task 2:</u> Review discordance.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many couples have different test results, even couples who have been together for a long time. • Remember that there are many factors that contribute to why partners might have different test results.
<p><u>Task 3:</u> Encourage mutual support and diffuse blame.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand it can be very hard to receive an HIV-positive test result, and as partners, it is difficult to receive different test results. • You will probably have many strong feelings about your HIV status and about each other. These feelings are very natural, and in time they will get easier to deal with. • You came here today to deal with HIV together. I really want to encourage you to focus now on how you can support each other to get through this tough time. • Remember that HIV infection could have happened at any time. It is difficult to know when and where it came from. The most important thing now is to focus on how to keep you both healthy. • Partner A, why don’t you tell Partner B how you’re feeling right now? • Partner B, can you tell partner A how you’re feeling right now? • Remember that you have dealt with difficult situations in the past, and you’re going to get through this. It may take some time to adjust to this new information, but in time, and with each other’s support, you will learn to cope and continue living positively together. • There is a lot we have to talk about, but first, do you have any questions?
<p><u>Task 4:</u> Advise to access care and treatment for HIV.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment can prevent transmission and help people with HIV live longer. • Other health issues can be discussed with HIV care provider to keep the partners healthy. 	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To HIV-positive partner:</i> Even though your results are HIV-positive, this does not mean that you have AIDS or that you’re going to become sick right away. • Remember that although these tests are very accurate, we are going to do a confirmatory test for HIV – the results from this test will be available in ____ days. • There is treatment for HIV that can help you live a long, healthy, productive life. Being on treatment is also one of the most important ways to prevent the spread of HIV to partners who are not infected. • When you’re ready, we’ll get you linked with a health care provider who will work with you to determine which treatments are right for you, and when you should begin taking them. • I know it may seem like a lot to take in, but getting linked with care and treatment is one of the most important things you can do to take care of yourself and each other right now. • What questions do you have about HIV care and treatment?

Testing Together *Rapid* HIV Testing Scripts: What to Say and Do for Each Step of the Protocol



STEP 7: Develop Care, Treatment, and Prevention Plan Based on Results – HIV-DISCORDANT PARTNERS	
<p><u>Task 5:</u> Advise on how to prevent HIV transmission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit sexual agreement and reinforce decisions that will prevent transmission. • Emphasize condom use, reducing number outside partners and testing outside partners. • Encourage outside partners to be tested. 	<p><u>Script:</u> <i>Adapt this section based on what the partners have already told you.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We previously discussed your agreement about sex in your relationship and with outside partners. Now that we have more information, is there anything about that agreement that you would like to change? • It is also important to talk about preventing HIV transmission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As we discussed, using condoms is one of the most effective ways of preventing HIV transmission. ○ It is also important to reduce the number of outside partners you have. ○ If you do have outside partners, it is also important to know their HIV status. You may want to talk with them about getting tested.
<p><u>Task 6:</u> Discuss need for re-testing HIV-negative partner.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just as we will do a confirmatory test for Partner A, we will also re-test you for HIV, to be sure your results are HIV-negative. This is something we do for all partners of people living with HIV.
<p><u>Task 7:</u> Discuss disclosure and getting support.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the beginning of the session, you both agreed to make decisions together regarding who to tell about your HIV test results. • Many partners find it helpful to identify a person or persons with whom they can share their HIV test results. • Are there any persons in your life that you would like to talk to about your HIV test results today? Who are these people? Do you both agree that these people would be helpful and supportive of you right now?
<p><u>Task 8:</u> Discuss pregnancy status and desires as needed.</p>	<p><u>Script:</u> <i>Adapt this section based on what the partners have already told you.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many options for partners living with HIV who would like to have children. Just because you have HIV does not mean you cannot have children. • I would encourage you to talk with your HIV care provider about your options, once you are ready.

STEP 8:

Refer and Link with Medical Care, Social and Behavioral Services – HIV-DISCORDANT PARTNERS

Task 1:

Link the partners with appropriate follow-up services based on their situation and needs, including:

- HIV care and treatment
- STI screening and/or treatment
- TB screening
- Partner services
- PrEP
- nPEP
- Behavioral interventions
- Reproductive health
- Re-testing for HIV
- Counseling for mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence

Script:

- Based on our discussions today, I would like to link you with the following follow-up services.

Adapt this section based on the partners' situation and needs.

Ensure that you are identifying and addressing any barriers the partners might have to seeking follow-up services, and that you are actively linking them with any necessary services by calling ahead, scheduling an appointment, or giving them the name of someone to talk to.