Addressing Prevention

Many of us have become increasingly weary of the narrow view of AIDS prevention that is so often proposed. This viewpoint includes the so-called “ABC” method, which often leads to divisions and arguments, and does not take cognisance of the complexity of the virus and causative factors for transmission.

In one of the discussions at the recent PACANet Pre-ICASA Christian Symposium I said in frustration that my alphabet does not stop at B or C! To motivate this I mentioned a few prevention issues starting with other letters of the alphabet. That was the beginning of a list of issues one could as consider part of prevention efforts.

If you think of others (and I am sure there are many) – please forward them to me. Maybe this little effort will help all of us to think wider when considering prevention!

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The Prevention Alphabet

A is abstinence but can also be for awareness, advocacy, agriculture, access to meds, assertiveness;
B is ‘Be faithful’, but can also be blood supply, breaking stigma, and building resilience and body piercing;
C is condoms but is also and primarily Christ, further also care, community, child care and protection, culture, compassion, and working for a cure!
D can be development, disease mitigation, dealing with drought effects, drug use and drug adherence;
E is empowerment, enablement, employment, environment, “each one teach one”, equality and efficacy;
F is families and strengthening of the family, food, faith, fairness;
G is always God but also gynaecological care, gender issues, greater involvement of people with AIDS;
H is health management, hope, homes and harm reduction;
I is injection safety and infection control and preventing iatrogenic infections and integration;
J is Jesus as our core and also joyful living, justice;
K is knowledge;
L is love and learning and life skills as well as leadership and laws.
M is marriage, marriage preparation, monogamy and migrant labour but also microbicide research;
N is nutrition, networking, needles, negotiation about sexuality;
O is orphan care and open communication;
P is parenting skills, public awareness, participative processes, power, poverty, prevention of mother to child transfer;
Q is for quality of care;
R is for respect, reproductive health, risk behaviour, rights and responsibilities, but sadly also for rape (including rape of children);
S is for sex and sexuality, sex trade, skills, sensitization, self-worth, self-determination, stigma, support services, scientific knowledge, substance use and safe practices;
T is for training, trust, trade justice, testing and treatment access;
U is for understanding;
V is for VCT, vaccines, violence, vulnerabilities and values;
W is for (HIV sensitive) worship, workplace programmes, widows and widow inheritance;
X is for addressing xenophobia;
Y is for Youth, Yes for life;
Z is Zero tolerance for stigma.