

Abstract: The Treatment of HIV in Rural East Africa

This project looks at an HIV treatment program started in the rural Kenyan town of Matoso. It presents some of the challenges and obstacles to developing and implementing this type of program. The treatment program is compared with another rural clinic located in Mutitu, Kenya where HIV treatment is not readily available nor a realistic option for the foreseeable future. Its purpose is to provide information and guidance for the development of future HIV treatment programs in rural areas of extreme poverty. The medical director and a staff physician of the Matoso HIV treatment program were interviewed and their program data reviewed. The author obtained observational data by visiting and briefly working at the Mutitu clinic. The data from the Matoso HIV program demonstrated that AIDS could be successfully treated. It concludes that there are five key components to a successful HIV treatment program in resource poor areas. The first is financial component, the second is clinical component, the third is an education/prevention component, the fourth component addresses poverty reduction and the final critical component is hope. This requires a treatment paradigm that is both holistic and significantly different from current Western allopathic models.