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Empowering Health Facilities

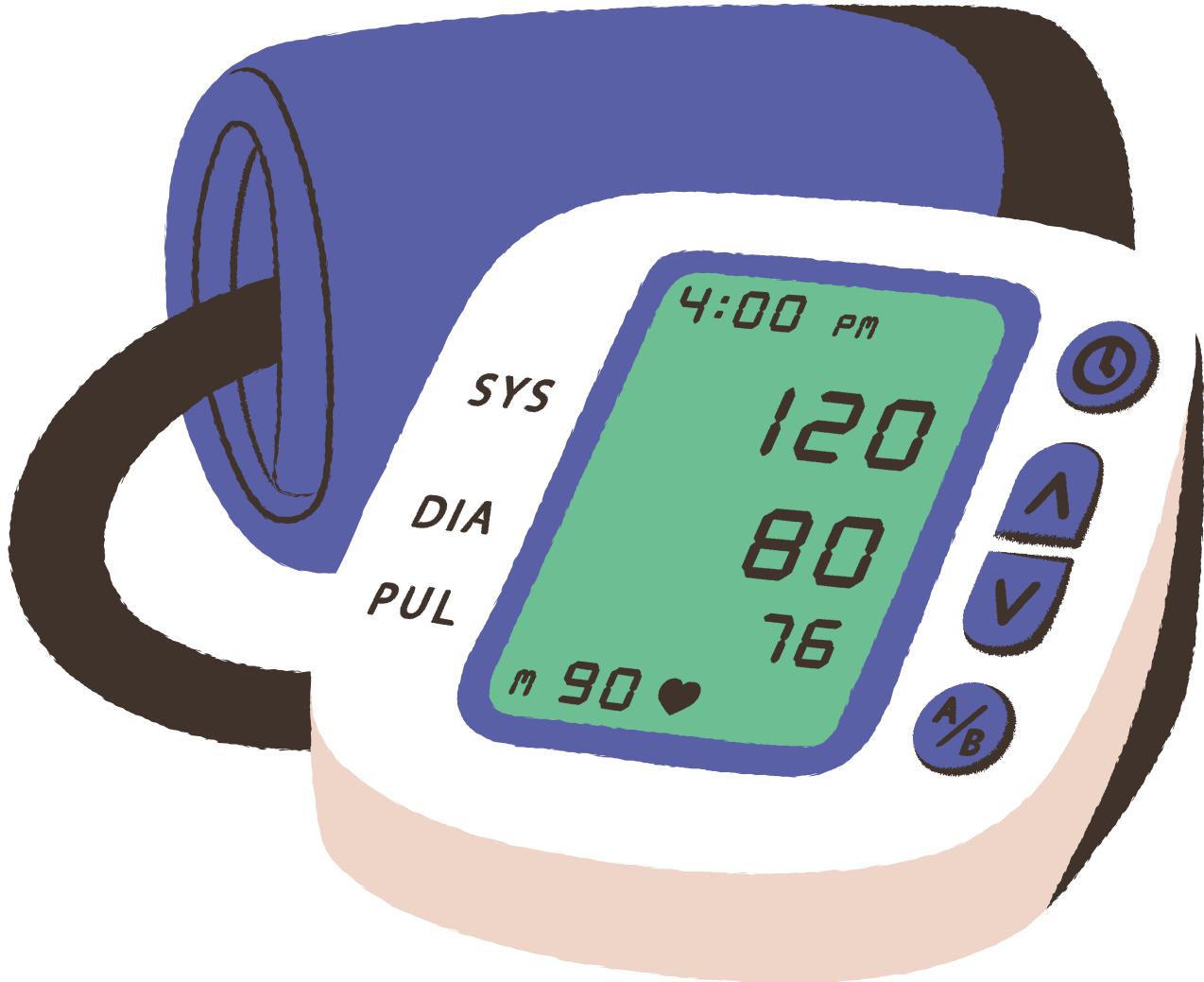
A Success Story of Integrated Hypertension and HIV Care

<http://integratedhivhtn.idrc-uganda.org/index.html>



Introduction:

In the past, the staff at various health facilities had limited knowledge and awareness regarding the coexistence of hypertension (HTN) and HIV in patients. However, remarkable progress has been made in implementing a comprehensive training program, ongoing mentorship, and the provision of essential resources. This success story from Elizabeth Arinitwe from the Uganda Heart Institute highlights the positive impact of integrating hypertension care into HIV care, leading to the identification and effective management of patients with both HTN and HIV.



Project Implementation:

The project began with extensive training to equip healthcare professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills to identify and manage patients with HTN and HIV. These trainings covered best practices for integrating hypertension care into HIV care and emphasised the importance of regular blood pressure (BP) monitoring. Furthermore, facilities were provided with digital BP machines and batteries to enable accurate and efficient monitoring.



Identification and Management of Patients:

As a result of the increased knowledge and resources, healthcare professionals quickly began to identify patients with hypertension among those receiving HIV care. Previously undetected cases of HTN, some severe, were discovered, with patients presenting complaints such as constant headaches. With the project's provision of hypertension medication, these patients were swiftly started on appropriate treatment, leading to successful BP control and alleviation of their symptoms.



Ongoing Support and Mentorship:

The project team conducted repeated mentorship sessions and support visits to the facilities to consolidate the knowledge gained and ensure consistent quality care. These sessions focused on reinforcing understanding, addressing challenges, and sharing best practices. Through ongoing support, healthcare professionals in the facilities gained confidence and expertise in the management of patients with both HTN and HIV.



Positive Outcomes:

The project's success has been widely observed across all 26 intervention facilities. For instance, Kibale HCIV in Kibale district has identified over 150 patients at their HIV clinic with both HTN and HIV, including many with severe hypertension. Thanks to the availability of hypertension medication provided by the project, most of these patients have achieved BP control, leading to improved overall health and well-being.

CONCLUSION

The integration of hypertension care into HIV care has demonstrated a significant positive impact within the health facilities involved in the project. By empowering healthcare professionals with knowledge, resources, and ongoing support, patients with HTN and HIV are identified promptly and receive appropriate management. This success story highlights the importance of integrated care and inspires other healthcare facilities to implement similar initiatives, ultimately leading to better health outcomes for patients with multiple conditions.

