



## Howard University College of Medicine Capitol Region Telehealth Project (HU CRTP)

### Case Study for: January 28, 2015 Webinar: “HIV and Gender-Based Violence”

## Case Study

Rita is a 51 year old African-American female diagnosed HIV+ approx. 20 years ago. Rita has an Associate Degree in marketing from the local community college and until two years ago worked in the retail industry. She has a history of alcohol abuse and has received in-patient treatment 4 times in the past 10 years. Recently she was diagnosed as being Bipolar and is hypertensive. Rita was raised in the foster care system and lived with several families before aging out of the system at 18. After a bitter divorce two years ago Rita found herself homeless and lived at the homeless shelter briefly before moving in with one of her foster sisters Carol and her family.

They have always had a rocky relationship but Carol was willing to provide shelter for her as she knew Rita was going through a difficult time in her life. Carol has always suspected that Rita may have been sexually abused at one of her foster homes. Carol also believed that Rita's marriage was an abusive one because of the unexplained bruises on her arms from time to time which forced Rita to wear long sleeve clothing even in the humid, sweltering summer months.

*Case Study from The Women's Collective (TWC)*



## Case Study

Rita is receiving anti-retroviral therapy at the local clinic and is insured by Medicaid. Last labs indicated her CD4 count was 1350, viral load “undetectable.” She also sees a mental health provider at the clinic.

Rita and Carol are constantly bickering about keeping the house clean. Rita plans to move by the end of the month although she cannot afford her own place. Her ex-husband Mike has reappeared on the scene and has convinced Rita that he has been in therapy and is a changed man. He is even going to church. Although she remains fearful, Rita moves in with Mike at the end of the month. Two months later Rita comes back to Carol with a broken arm, black eye and split lip. Mike was arrested for IPV. Rita hopes Carol will help bail him out because she feels responsible. The bus was late and she did not get home in time to make his dinner as he had expected.

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