

# The Community Dentistry Scholars Program: A Community Engagement Program for Dental Students

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## INTRODUCTION

- ◆ Columbia University College of Dental Medicine (CDM) has partnered with multiple community partners to implement and sustain a comprehensive dental care delivery system for socially vulnerable people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in Harlem, Northern Manhattan and the South Bronx, NYC.
- ◆ A training program targeting pre-doctoral dental students that complements this delivery system has been developed and implemented (see Figure 1).
- ◆ The Community Dentistry Scholars Program (CDSP) provides a three-tiered educational experience (see Figure 2):
  - 1) online self-paced training;
  - 2) face-to-face interactive lectures; and
  - 3) experiential community-based training in the provision of education and clinical services for PLWHA.

Figure 1

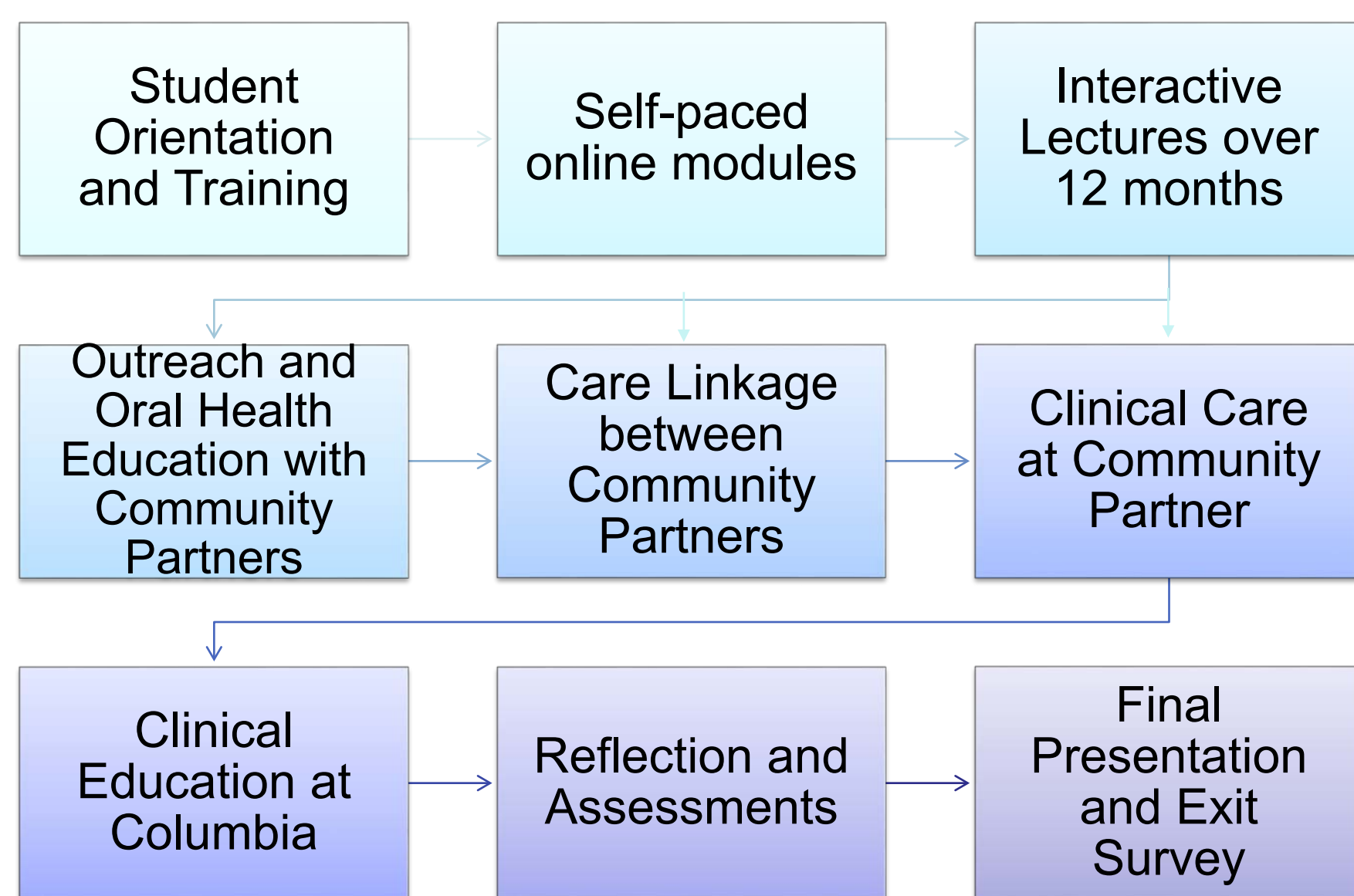
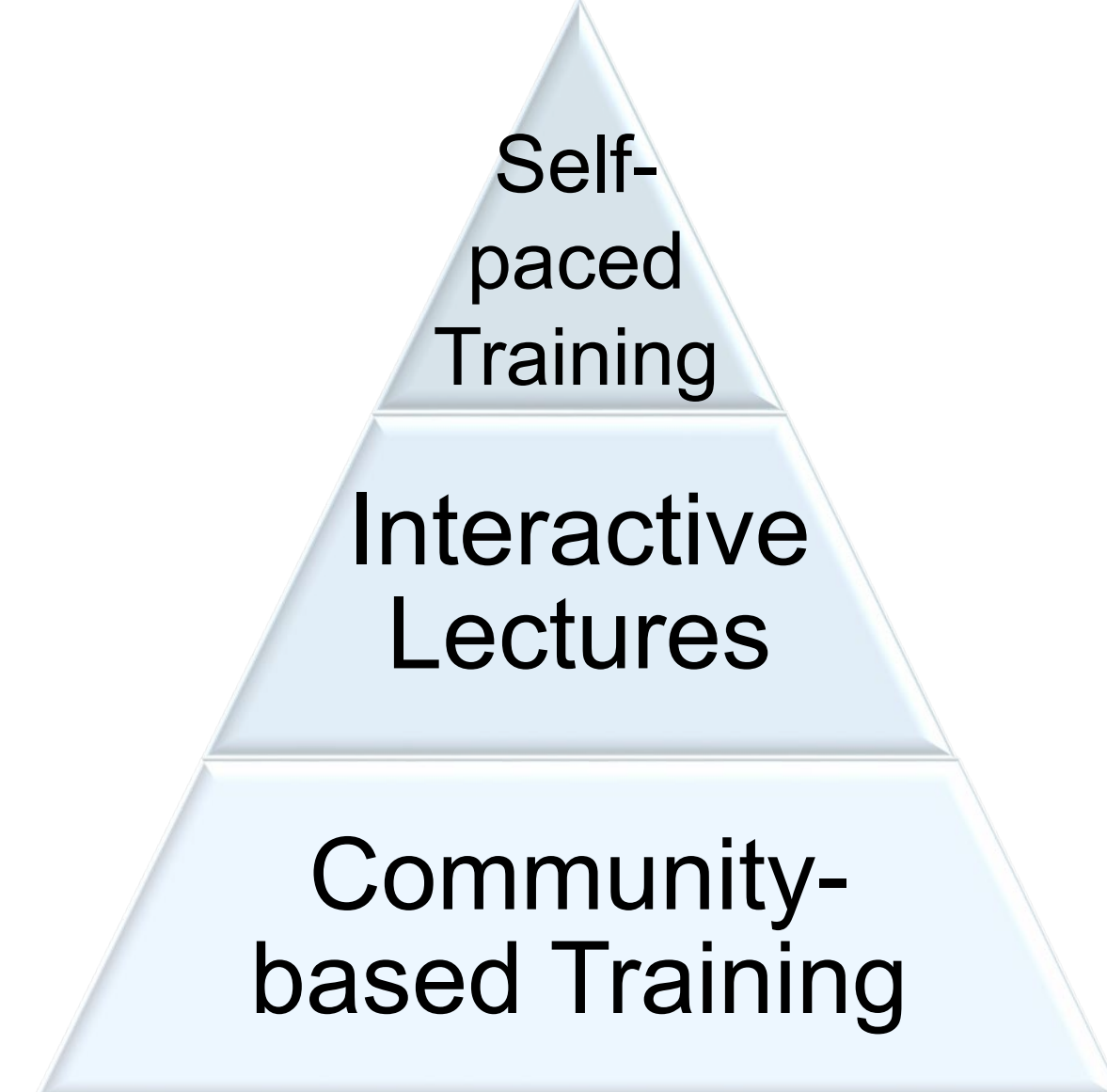


Figure 2



## METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

- ◆ Trainees are assessed via pre/post-program Knowledge and Attitudes (KA) surveys, presentations, self-reflection essays and an anonymous exit survey.
- ◆ Analyses of the KA survey responses were conducted to evaluate and make necessary adjustments to the program.
- ◆ Forty-six trainees have been accepted into CDSP since the first 2019 cohort: 29 trainees have completed the program and 17 trainees are in the process of completing didactic and experiential requirements.
- ◆ 23 students completed both the pre-program and post-program KA surveys.

## RESULTS

- ◆ Demographics and prior experience responses of the 23 students who completed the program are shown in Figure 3.
- ◆ Figure 4 illustrates the CDSP Lecture Series by attendees.
- ◆ Tables 1 and 2 illustrate select KA survey responses.

Figure 3

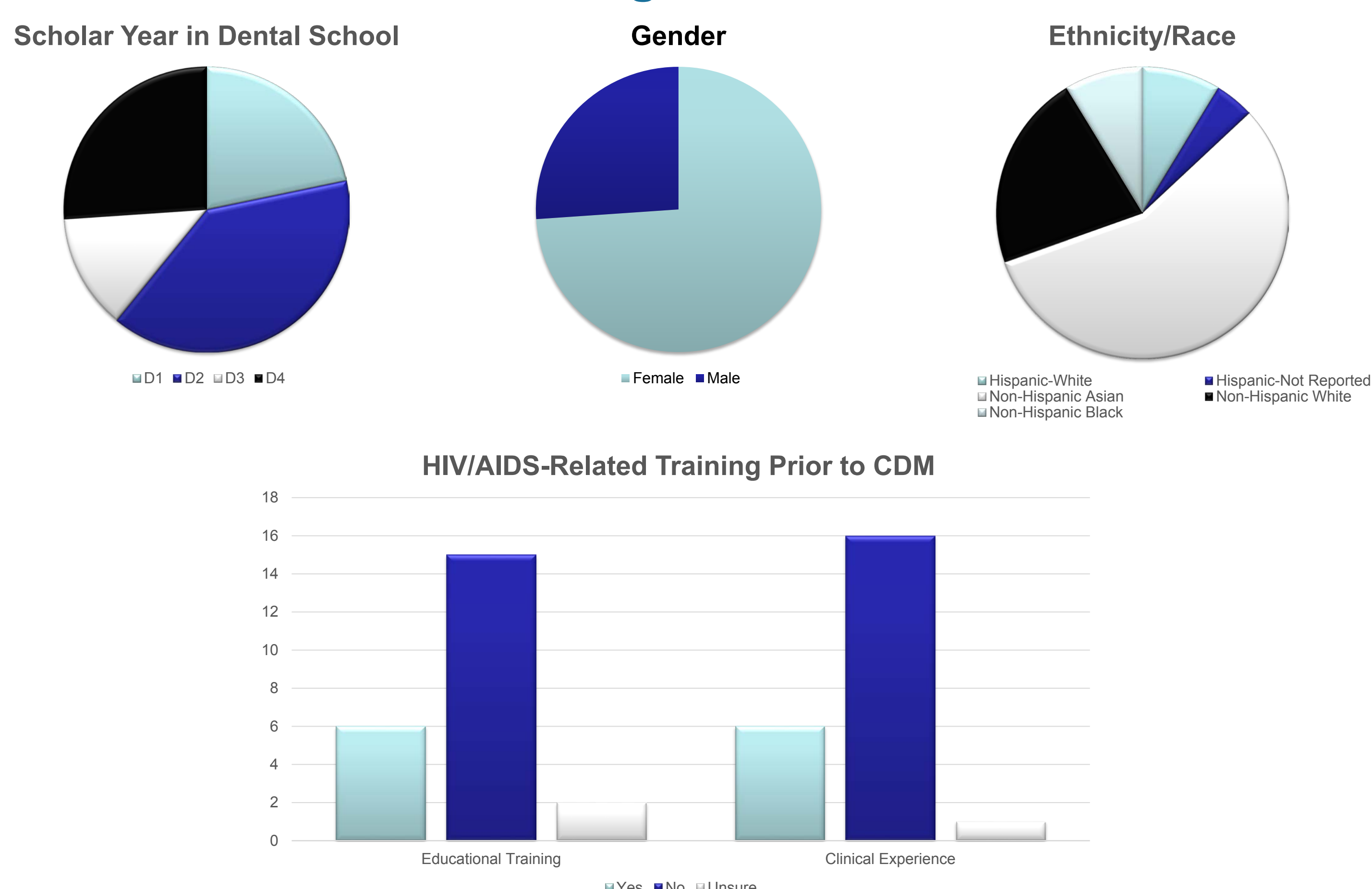


Figure 4

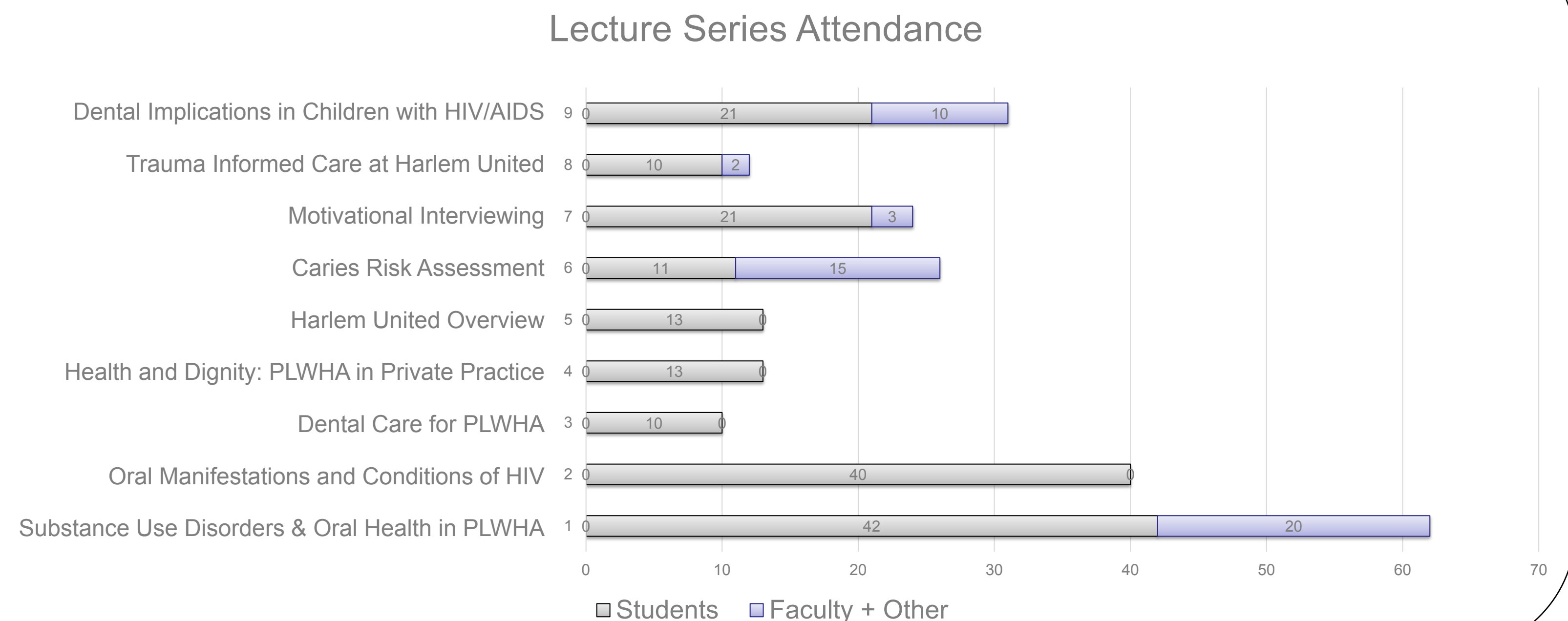


Table 1

Knowledge Assessment Question	Pretest % Correct	Posttest % Correct	% Change
Saliva is a vehicle for the transmission of HIV	87%	100%	+13%
The risk of HIV infection after a needle stick injury involving an HIV-positive patient is about 45-50%	78%	96%	+18%
The decision whether or not to prescribe antibiotic prophylaxis to HIV+ patients prior to invasive dental care is best determined by the patient's CD4 count and viral load	70%	100%	+30%
The normal CD4 range for a healthy person is 300-500 mm3	52%	83%	+31%

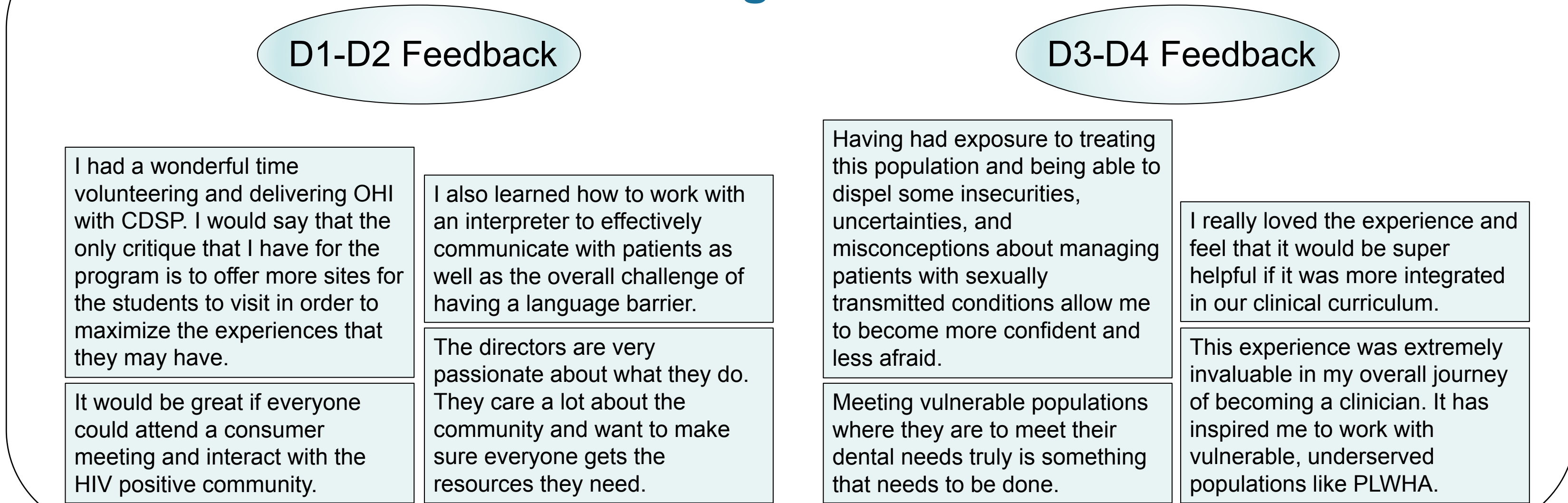
Table 2

Attitude Assessment Responses	
In the pretest responses, all students (100%) Strongly or Somewhat Agreed dental school curriculum should include more information about patients with HIV/AIDS.	
Almost all students (96%) Strongly or Somewhat Agreed that dentists have a professional obligation to treat PLWH.	
After program completion, students reported increased confidence in clinical skills due to education on infection control (78% pre vs 87% post).	
After program completion, students became less concerned about contracting HIV from a patient (35% pre vs 22% post).	

## LESSONS LEARNED

- ◆ Scholar survey analysis and feedback informs ongoing CDSP curriculum enhancement and program development including training materials, evaluation surveys, and didactic topics addressed in lecture series.
- ◆ Figure 5 illustrates feedback from each Dental class cohort (D1-D4):

Figure 5



## CHALLENGES/LIMITATIONS

- ◆ Potential bias with self-selection to voluntary extracurricular program.
- ◆ Establishing and maintaining a comprehensive continuum of educational opportunity requires a tiered approach to student engagement that is linked throughout the dental curriculum.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This CBDPP program is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$1,806,960 with 0 percentage financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit HRSA.gov.