

LINKAGE: MORE THAN A REFERRAL

Referral – The provision of timely, appropriate guidance to an individual designed to refer the individual to a specific care and/or service provider.

Linkage – An individual is seen by a healthcare provider (physician, physician’s assistant, nurse practitioner) to receive medical care for HIV infection, usually within a specific time. Linkage is the post-referral verification that medical services were accessed by the individual being referred to care. Linkage to medical care is the outcome of the referral. The term linkage applies specifically to medical care and not to referrals for other types of services.

REFERRAL	LINKAGE
give client a list of physicians/clinics	give client a list of physicians/clinics and allow client to choose a provider
provide client with information on other community services (pamphlets/brochures)	educate client about medical/care services and teach them how to navigate the system of care in their community
refer client to a specific care or service provider and instruct client to make an appointment	schedule medical appointment with client
remind client of the appointment	remind client of the medical appointment
	if possible, attend the appointment with client
	transport client to the appointment <u>or</u> arrange transportation, such as bus passes or gas cards (if needed)
	follow up with client or provider after the appointment to ensure services were received
	confirm medical care services were accessed within 90 days