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A comparative analysis between public and private health facilities in the delivery of ART programmes, with specific focus on challenges to treatment adherence in the Mopani district of the Limpopo Province, South Africa

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the challenges to antiretroviral therapy (ART) adherence. South Africa has the highest number of people living with HIV and AIDS in the world. It has a population of approximately 50.6 million people (0.7% of the world's population). The Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic (2012), estimates that 5.6 million people live with HIV in South Africa. The total number of people on ART in South Africa is 1.9 million.There is not yet a cure for HIV and AIDS, ART remains the only alternative for people who are infected. With great concern the researcher has noticed that some clients on ART face several challenges that make it difficult for them to adhere to their medication. The study was conducted in the Mopani District of the Limpopo Province in South Africa. Eight health facilities were identified and all sub-districts of the Mopani District were involved in the study. Health facilities sampled comprised of 7 public health facilities and 1 private health facility. The exploratory research design was applied. A triangulation research methodology was adopted. Major challenges included the following; insufficient support for people on ART, reluctance to disclose HIV status, unemployment, stigma and discrimination. There was a very high rate of lost to follow-up in public health facilities and the monitoring and evaluation strategies employed by the private health facility were found to be efficient. There are more women living with HIV than men. A family centredand gender sensitive approach is needed.There has to be collaboration for us to be able to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) and to achieve our dream of having an HIV free generation.

Biography

Tiny P. Mona is from South Africa. She holds a BA, Honours and Masters' degrees in Sociology from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. She holds a certificate in Gender Studies from Utrecht Universityin the Netherlands and a Post Graduate Diploma in HIV and AIDS management from Stellenbosch University. Ms Mona has extensive experience in implementing HIV and AIDS programmes and conducting research, within the public and private sector, as well as managing donor funding. She is currently writing a book with scholars from Utrecht University, the Netherlands. She is a Lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Limpopo. She has just submitted her PhD thesis in Sociology.

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