

Private Sector Doctor Involvement in HIV and AIDS Management in the eThekweni [Durban] Metro.

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Introduction

- **AIDS in developing world - serious public health problem**
- **Management: crucial role of both public and private health care sectors**
- **Prevention & Management: pivotal role of private sector General Practitioners (GPs) and specialists**
- **Requires accurate knowledge of the management,¹ and positive attitudes towards persons with HIV/AIDS.**
- **Recognition and overcoming of barriers which prevent doctors from providing care to HIV/AIDS patients.**



Aim

- To investigate the involvement of private sector doctors in the management of HIV and AIDS patients and their training needs, in the eThekweni (Durban) Metro of Kwa Zulu Natal.



Objectives

- To examine the current level of involvement of private sector doctors in the management of HIV infected patients in the Durban Metro.
- To identify if there is any association between the age and / or the number of years qualified as a doctor and their involvement in the management of HIV infected patients.
- To assess the needs of the private sector doctor for HIV training and information.



Method

Study design:

- **Descriptive cross sectional study.**

Study Area:

eThekweni (Durban) Metro



Study Population

- **All private general practitioners and specialists working in the eThekweni Metro of KwaZulu Natal.**
- **Comprehensive list of 1255 doctors and specialists practising in the Metro obtained from: Medpages Directory, KwaZulu Natal Managed Care Coalition database , doctors' guilds, Lancet Clinic courier database and the SA HIV Clinicians Society**



Study Sample

- **Minimal contact with HIV/AIDS patients: Specialist doctors viz gynaecologists, surgeons, psychiatrists, cardiologists, anaesthetists ophthalmologists, plastic surgeons, and critical care doctors working in trauma unit of private hospitals.**
- **These doctors [n=200] excluded from the sample.**
- **Of sample size of n=1055, 74 (7.36%) questionnaires returned.**
- **Valid sample size of n=931.**



Study instrument

- **Structured self report questionnaire.**

Ethical clearance

- **Institutional ethical permission was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine.**



Data Collection

- Questionnaires sent to all private GPs and specialists, to investigate whether they treated HIV and AIDS patients and their training needs.
- Two weeks to complete the questionnaire.
- Questionnaires returned by post, fax, emailed, collected or returned via the courier system.
- Follow up with non responders was via telephone or visits.

Data Entry and Analysis

Data captured and analyzed using SPSS 11.5.



Results

RESPONSE RATE:

- Response rate 35.6%. 331 questionnaires were returned.
- Of the 331 responses received:
 - n=236 doctors manage HIV infected patients,
 - n=93 doctors do not manage these patients
 - n=2 doctors did not answer this question.

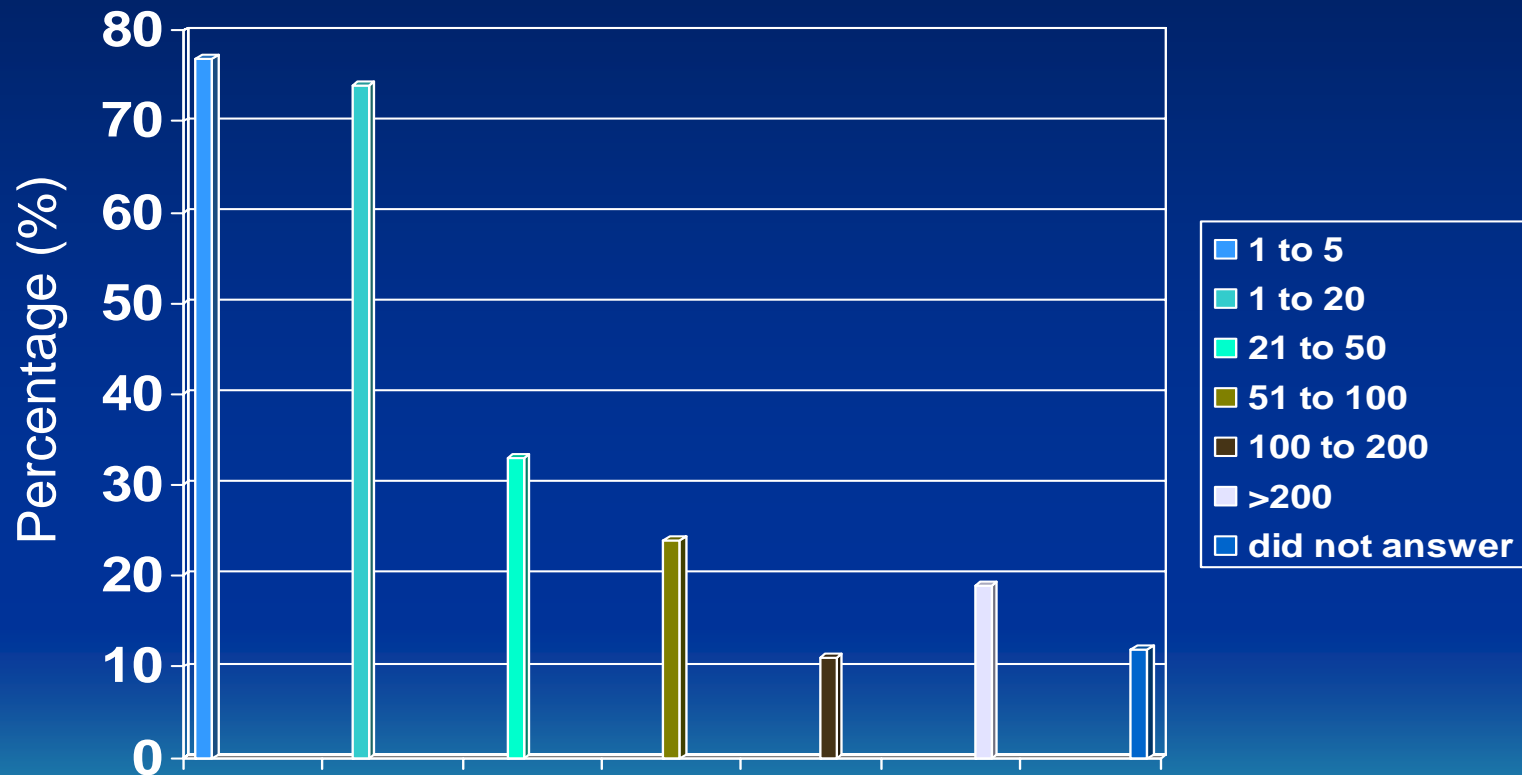


Mean number of qualified years of doctors

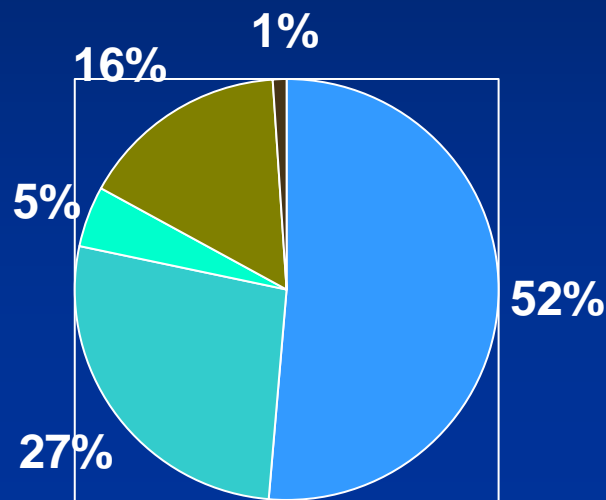
- Mean number of years since doctors qualified was 22 years (SD 10.45)
- Significantly more younger doctors, mean number of years qualified = 19.8 years (SD 9.61) treated HIV and AIDS patients, than older doctors (mean number of years qualified 27.8 (SD 10.31) ($p < 0.001$)



Number of HIV infected patients managed by private sector doctors (n=236)

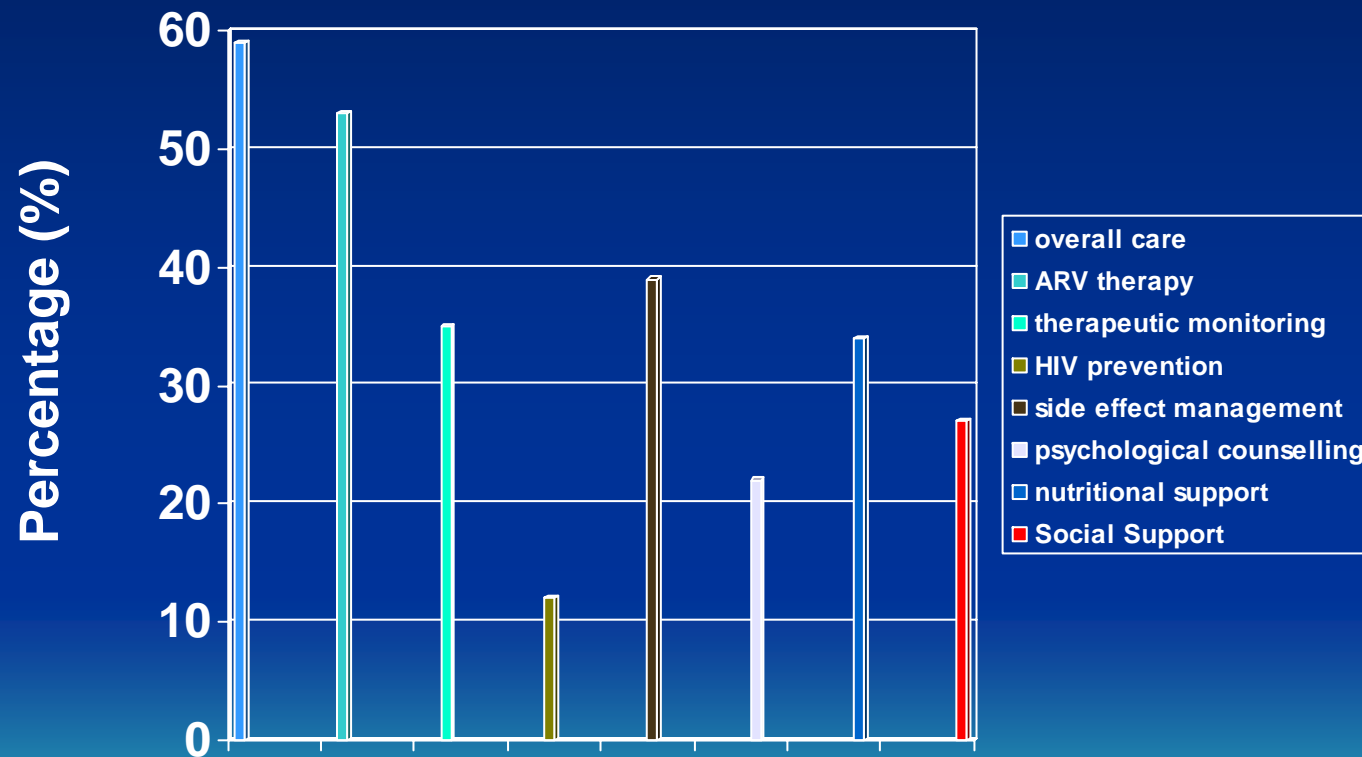


Doctors reasons for not managing HIV infected patients (n=93)



- no HIV infected patients
- refer HIV infected patients
- cost factor
- no reasons cited
- did not answer

Training Requirements of Private Sector Doctors (n=247)



Discussion

- Care of people with HIV and AIDS: Challenging due to multidisciplinary nature, medical complexity, physical manifestations, need for infection control procedures and the associated stigma.
- Despite this challenge the majority of the respondents manage HIV patients.²
- With increasing prevalence of AIDS its necessary for general practitioners to be involved in the care of patients.³
- At this stage of the epidemic every doctor should be managing these patients in KZN ,since this province has the highest prevalence in the country as shown by antenatal clinic attendees data.⁴

Discussion cont.

- Older doctors less likely to manage HIV patients.
- Several factors could be responsible for doctors not managing HIV and AIDS patients.
- From studies in other countries barriers exist preventing doctors from managing HIV and AIDS patients.
- Included fear by doctors of becoming infected, homophobia, burnout, religious attitudes, unwillingness to care and the absence of touch.²



Discussion cont.

- More training: Required by 75% of Doctors in this study
- Results consistent with other studies: doctors felt inadequately trained and therefore opted not to manage HIV and AIDS patients.
- Rawlings et al reported that almost half of the respondents had either no experience or a max 5yr in treating HIV infected patients. This limited experience together with a lack of support staff were listed as impediments to care.⁵
- Lack of appropriate training also posed a barrier to doctors managing HIV and AIDS patients in USA .⁶



Discussion cont.

- Loss of patients: refused to treat HIV and AIDS patients because they feared they would lose patients,⁷
- Structural barriers: lack of support staff,⁵ appropriate remuneration,⁸ together with lack of time were cited as barriers.⁹



Conclusion and Recommendation

- GPs involved in the management of HIV and AIDS patients - But not to the extent that is needed.
- More younger doctors are involved in the management than older doctors .
- Need more information and training for effective management of HIV and AIDS patients.
- Reduce barriers - so that lack of training or knowledge does not prevent doctors managing these patients.
- Further studies required to assess whether barriers prevent GPs playing an active role in the management of HIV and AIDS patients.



Limitations

- Low response rate.

Possible reasons (non responders (n=600)):

- Not managing HIV and AIDS patients
- Do not want to participate in research
- Too busy to fill out the questionnaires.



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- SA HIV Clinicians Society
- Doctors' Guilds



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THANK YOU!!!!

