

Annual Congress &amp; Medicare Expo on

# Primary Healthcare

April 25-27, 2016 Dubai, UAE

## Assessment of emotional problems faced by people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and to study the need for family support to manage the emotional problems

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HIV/AIDS is one of the most alarming social challenges faced by the people in the Universe. It has been described as the “most devastating epidemic humanity has ever known”. Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a lentivirus that causes the infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). As on today the disease is fatal, but it is totally preventable. AIDS is the end result of a viral infection, caused by a group of viruses known as Human Immunodeficiency viruses. UNDP 2010 reports that India had 2.39 million people living with HIV at the end of 2009. The present study highlights the effect of emotional problems faced by the person with HIV and AIDS. HIV infection has a major impact on the mental health of the person which has a chance of causing cognitive impairment, mood and anxiety disorders, and even psychotic manifestations. Various psychological issues leading to manifestations among PLWHAs are acute-stress reactions, anxiety disorders, depression, mania, psychosis and neuro-psychiatric manifestations of HIV associated neurological illness. Testing for HIV is itself evokes a lot of anxiety. It is very general that most of them take lot of time to muster up courage to undertake the test. Not all will react in a positive way. The first reaction is anger, depression and failure to cope up with life. Suicidal thoughts will occur. At this time there is a need for proper counselling. Appropriate counselling or absence of any other social support can devastate an individual. They experience a lot of stress mentally as many emotional problems occur to them. To cope up with these stressors there should be a need for social support for which the PLWHAs could be able to tell them about the sero-status for moral, emotional and psychological support. Majority of our study population included males (52.2%) and rest are females (37.8%). Majority of them had primary (58.6%) and secondary (37.8%) level of education. 99.1% are infected through sexual contact. 38.7% of respondents receive support from spouse, and secondary family members. 95.5% respondents are satisfied with the support they get from family members. Most of our respondents (41.4%) always and sometimes (55.9%) get financial support for their medication, only 2.7% will never get support. 94.6% of respondents feel they have someone to listen their feelings and thoughts. 41.4% respondents get reminder to take ART medication from their family members. 81.1% of the respondents felt that they can always participate in family function. The present study highlighted the fact that adherence of ART treatment is better when family support is high.

### Biography

Manjula A Rao has completed her MPhil in Social Work from Coimbatore University and PhD scholar from the same University. She is working as a Counsellor in Kasturba Medical College, Mangalore. She has 20 years experience in HIV field. She has presented 15 scientific papers in national and international conferences. She has published papers on HIV and received Best Paper Award in Practitioner Category. She is the Director of RUCES and ADHAR charitable trust. She is a national level master trainer for different organisation and member of many organisation which works in welfare of the community.

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