

policy

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MEASURING HIV
STIGMA AND
DISCRIMINATION
AMONG HEALTH
FACILITY STAFF

MONITORING
TOOL FOR GLOBAL
INDICATORS

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INTRODUCTION

New Globally Tested Tool for Measuring HIV-related Stigma and Discrimination in Health Facilities

For people living with and affected by HIV, stigma and discrimination within health facilities are serious barriers to healthcare access and engagement. Researchers have documented numerous instances worldwide of people living with HIV receiving substandard care or being deterred from seeking care. Although progress has been made in training and other interventions to reduce HIV-related stigma in healthcare facilities, these programs have not been institutionalized as routine practice or implemented on a large scale. Moreover, the tools for measuring stigma tend to be overly long and time-consuming to administer, thus infeasible for use in facilities.

In an effort to address these issues, an international team of researchers developed a brief, globally standardized questionnaire for measuring stigma and discrimination in health facilities. This tool can help facilitate routine monitoring of HIV-related stigma, as well as the expansion and improvement of programming and policies at the health-facility level.

The questionnaire was developed and tested through a collaborative, deliberative process that involved experts from multiple countries. The experts agreed to focus on four areas that are especially relevant to stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings: 1) fear of HIV infection among health facility staff; 2) stereotypes and prejudice related to people living with or thought to be living with HIV; 3) observed and secondary stigma and discrimination; and 4) policy and work environment.

A questionnaire was created and researchers field tested it in China (n=300), Dominica (n=335), Egypt (n=300), Kenya (n=350), Puerto Rico (n=301), and St. Kitts & Nevis (n=307). The testing involved administration to clinical and nonclinical staff members, with a mix of self- and interviewer-administered modes. After the field testing, the research team gathered to consider the survey items' performance across the six sites, examining psychometric properties and contextual issues.

The resulting questionnaire measures programmatically actionable drivers of HIV-related stigma and discrimination among healthcare facility staff. It also captures observations of HIV-related stigma and discrimination within the facility and the extent to which providers experience stigma and discrimination as a result of providing care to people living with or believed to be living with HIV.

Two questionnaires are publicly available: a comprehensive brief version for program planning, evaluation, and research purposes, and a monitoring questionnaire that includes only the eight questions needed to collect six globally approved indicators for measuring stigma and discrimination in health facilities. These indicators can be found in the UN indicator registry—a repository of indicators used to track the AIDS epidemic and the national, regional, and global response—located at <http://www.indicatorregistry.org>. Each questionnaire can be used for high-prevalence or low-prevalence settings.

More information on implementation of the questionnaire is available in the user manual found at <http://www.healthpolicyproject.com/index.cfm?id=StigmaPackage>.

For further information, please contact Laura Nyblade at lnyblade@rti.org.

SECTION 1: INFECTION CONTROL

Now we will ask you about infection concerns in your health facility.

1. How worried would you be about getting HIV if you did the following?
If any of the following is not one of your job responsibilities, please select "Not applicable."
 - a. Touched the clothing of a patient living with HIV
 Not worried A little worried Worried Very worried Not applicable
 - b. Dressed the wounds of a patient living with HIV
 Not worried A little worried Worried Very worried Not applicable
 - c. Drew blood from a patient living with HIV
 Not worried A little worried Worried Very worried Not applicable
2. Do you typically use any of the following measures when providing care or services for a patient living with HIV?
 - a. Avoid physical contact
 Yes No Not applicable
 - b. Wear double gloves
 Yes No Not applicable

SECTION 2: HEALTH FACILITY ENVIRONMENT

Now we will ask about practices in your health facility and your experiences working in a facility that provides care to people living with HIV.

3. In the past 12 months have you seen a person living with HIV in your health facility?

- Yes —————> go to question 4
- No —————> skip to question 5
- Don't know ———> skip to question 5

4. *In the past 12 months*, how often have you observed the following in your health facility?

a. Healthcare workers unwilling to care for a patient living with or thought to be living with HIV

- Never
- Once or twice
- Several times
- Most of the time

b. Healthcare workers providing poorer quality of care to a patient living with or thought to be living with HIV, relative to other patients

- Never
- Once or twice
- Several times
- Most of the time

SECTION 3: HEALTH FACILITY POLICIES

Now we are going to ask about the institutional policy and work environment in your facility.

5. I will get in trouble at work if I discriminate against patients living with HIV.
- Yes No Don't Know
6. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements?
- a. There are adequate supplies in my health facility that reduce my risk of becoming infected with HIV.
- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
- b. There are standardized procedures/protocols in my health facility that reduce my risk of becoming infected with HIV.
- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
7. My health facility has written guidelines to protect patients living with HIV from discrimination.
- Yes No Don't Know

SECTION 4: OPINIONS ABOUT PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

Now we are going to ask about opinions related to people living with HIV.

8. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements?

- a. Most people living with HIV do not care if they infect other people.
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

- b. People living with HIV should feel ashamed of themselves.
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

- c. People get infected with HIV because they engage in irresponsible behaviors.
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

- d. Women living with HIV should be allowed to have babies if they wish.
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree



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