



Addressing Unmet Needs of Older People Living With HIV

Non-HIV medical care, peer support and housing are urgent unmet needs.

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Nearly 40% of older people with HIV have at least one unmet need, according to a recent study. Today, more than half of HIV-positive people in the United States are ages 50 or older. Like the general population, people living with HIV are more prone to comorbidities as they age, and they may face challenges, such as reduced mobility, cognitive decline and financial instability.

Researchers with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention assessed the need for ancillary services among 2,391 HIV-positive people ages 55 and older using data from the Medical Monitoring Project collected between June 2019 and May 2021.

They found that 17% had at least one unmet need for HIV support services, such as medication payment assistance, adherence support, case management, patient navigation or HIV peer group support.

Further, 27% had an unmet need for non-HIV medical services, such as dental care, mental health care or substance use counseling, and 27% had an unmet need for subsistence services, including transportation, food or assistance with shelter or housing.

“Additional concerted efforts by state and local health departments, federal entities, private providers and community partners are necessary to reduce unmet needs,” the researchers concluded.

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