Study: HIV Key to Worldwide Adult Mortality Rates

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HIV was the key to reversing the worldwide decline in adult mortality from 1970 to 1990, according to a study published in *The Lancet* and reported by Plus News. The study uses data from 187 countries on adult mortality from 1970 to 2010.

According to the article, worldwide mortality is about 26 percent lower than it was 40 years ago. However, regions severely affected by HIV, such as sub-Saharan Africa, have skewed the overall percentages.

The study reinforces arguments for increasing access to antiretroviral treatments and expanding programs to prevent mother-to-child transmission of the virus, said Christopher Murray, a co-author of the study at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington.

Murray also suggested that monitoring adult mortality should be improved, particularly through better data collection on the HIV pandemic as well as chronic diseases such as diabetes, alcoholism and heart disease.

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