In Africa, Increasing HIV Treatment Appears to Lower Stigma

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The scale-up of antiretroviral (ARV) treatment for HIV in sub-Saharan Africa is associated with a reduction in overall stigma toward people living with the virus, aidsmap reports. Publishing their findings in the American Journal of Public Health, researchers analyzed 43 population-based surveys about HIV stigma conducted in 18 African nations between 2003 and 2012.

During the earlier years of these surveys, 84 percent of men and 91 percent of women responded to at least one of four main questions with a stigmatizing attitude toward HIV-positive people.

Between 2003 and 2006, 2 percent of people living with HIV in the countries surveyed were taking ARVs. By the end of the period included in this analysis, the average HIV treatment rate was 17 percent.

After adjusting for various factors, the researchers found that with each 10 percent increase in the treatment rate, 2.8 percent fewer men and 2.3 percent fewer women gave at least one stigmatizing answers to the survey questions.

To read the aidsmap article, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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