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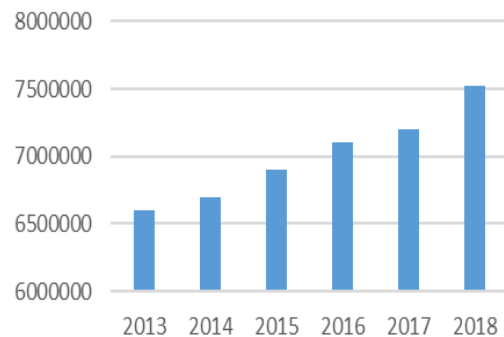
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Introduction

SA has a steady increase in the number of people living with HIV, with a prevalence of 13.06%, and 7.52 million people living with HIV by end of 2018. This puts a burden on the health care system. Nurses are an integral part in the provision of care to people living with HIV (PLWHIV), and their training is meant to prepare them to be ready for such task. The study's purpose was to determine the readiness level of final year nursing students for the provision of HIV care in one of Western Cape nursing training institutions.

Readiness = Willingness + confidence + knowledge

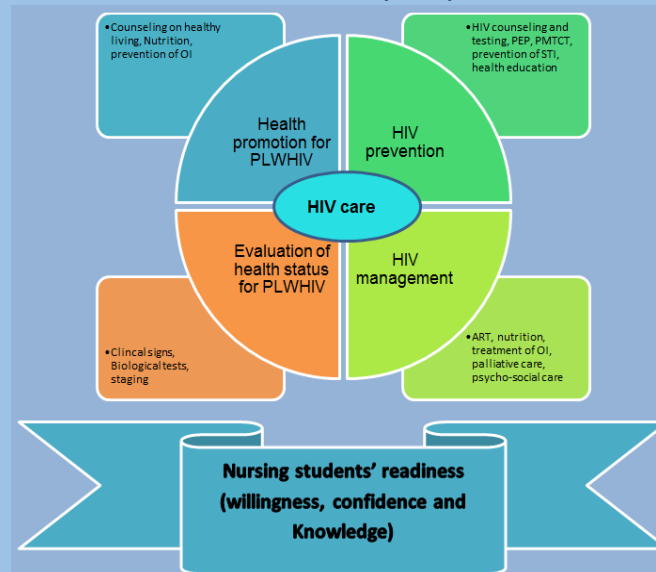
PLWHIV in SA



Methodology

Cross-sectional survey design was applied. An all-inclusive sample size of 103 final year nursing students at a nursing institution in the Western Cape, South Africa responded. A questionnaire covering readiness on the 4 aspects of HIV care was used. Validity and reliability were ensured. All ethical principles were adhered to.

HIV care aspects framework – Adapted from Knebel et al. (2008)



Results

Of the respondents 77.2% were below the age of 29 years, with 52% being less than 25 years of age, and 89.3% were female.

Up to 15% had previous experience in health care before the nursing programme, and 41% had a family member or co-worker living with HIV. Only 68% were willing to initiate ART with fewer (57.3%) feeling confident to do so.

Up to 81% of respondents were willing to treat opportunistic infections (OIs), but only 68% were confident to do so.

Over 90% were willing and confident to conduct an HIV test. Up to 92% of the students mistakenly identified heart attack as one of OIs, and only 10.7% correctly indicated that HIV rapid test does not detect the presence of HIV.

Only 38% knew that ART must continue even if PCR is negative for breastfeeding infants, and less than half correctly identified the use of Rifampin (41.2%) and Cotrimoxazole (48.5%).

This fits the low level of confidence in the treatment of OI and ART initiation. Over 90% of the students had correct knowledge on preventative measures. They were more willing than confident.

Readiness scores: less than 60: very low; 60-69: low; 70-79: moderate; over 79: high level of readiness

Overall scores for respondents' readiness level in each HIV care aspect

HIV care aspects	Willingness level	Confidence level	Knowledge level	Overall per HIV care aspects
1. HIV prevention	88.3% High	84.1% High	47.5% Very low	73.3% Moderate
2. Health promotion for PLWH	86% High	80.9% High	53.1% Very low	73.3% Moderate
3. Evaluation of health status for PLWH	85.7% High	78.9% Moderate	51.1% Very low	71.9% Moderate
4. HIV management	76.6% Moderate	70.2% Moderate	69% Low	71.9% Moderate
Overall readiness	84.1% High	78.5 % Moderate	55.1% Very Low	73% Moderate

Discussion & Conclusion

The final year nursing students are more willing than confident, and scored low on knowledge level for all the 4 aspects of HIV care. Some knowledge gaps were identified. This is a reflection of their status as novice in the nursing profession, and indicates need to improve their knowledge.

HIV management knowledge was higher compared to knowledge of other aspects of HIV care, and the HEI can strengthen those areas. Overall readiness level is at a moderate level, giving an indication that once knowledge level is increased, their provision of HIV care and management after graduation will be appropriate. Student nurses need more learning opportunities in HIV care and management to improve their confidence.