

TREATMENT-RELATED PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, AND PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES AND THEIR IMPACT ON INDICATORS OF QUALITY OF LIFE

Patricia de los Rios,¹ Brent Allan,² Chinyere Okoli,³ Benjamin Young,¹ Erika Castellanos,⁴ Garry Brough,⁵ Anton Eremin,⁶ Giulio Maria Corbelli,⁷ Marvelous Muchenje,⁸ Marta Mc Britton,⁹ Nicolas Van de Velde³

¹ViiV Healthcare, Research Triangle Park, NC, USA; ²The International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO), Toronto, Canada; ³ViiV Healthcare, Brentford, Middlesex, UK; ⁴Global Action for Trans* Equality (GATE), New York, NY, USA; ⁵Positively UK, London, UK; ⁶AIDS Center Foundation, Moscow, Russia; ⁷European AIDS Treatment Group, Rome, Lazio, Italy; ⁸ViiV Healthcare, Quebec, Canada; ⁹Instituto Cultural Barong, São Paulo, Brazil

Introduction

- Despite effectiveness of antiretroviral therapy (ART), some people living with HIV (PLHIV) still face barriers to daily oral ART adherence¹
- Some of these barriers include inconvenient scheduling, food requirements with ART, adverse effects, and privacy concerns
- We characterized treatment-related physical, emotional, and psychosocial challenges among PLHIV from 25 countries

Methods

- We analyzed data from the 2019 Positive Perspectives Study of PLHIV, a global, web-based survey conducted in 25 countries (n = 2389). Inclusion criteria for the survey were: (1) Be willing and able to provide informed consent, (2) aged 18 to 84 years, (3) self-identify as having been diagnosed with HIV, (4) currently on ART, and (5) resident of a participating country. Methodology is described elsewhere^{1,2}
- The survey assessed for presence of specific treatment challenges and experiences:
- Viral suppression was defined as a response of "Undetectable" or "Suppressed" to the question, "What is your most recent viral load?"
- "Optimal health" was assessed within the past 4 weeks; self-rating of health as "Good" or "Very good" was classified as "optimal" (vs "Neither good nor poor," "Poor," or "Very poor")
- Concerns toward HIV treatment as well as interactions with healthcare providers (HCPs): Responses of "Agree" or "Strongly agree" were classified as a positive indication that the concern existed (vs "Strongly disagree," "Disagree," or "Neither agree nor disagree")
- Suboptimal adherence was defined as having missed HIV medication ≥5 times in the past month because of ≥1 reason
- Difficulty swallowing pills was defined as scores ≥ 3 (on an ordinal scale from 1 to 5) in response to the question: "In general, how easy or difficult do you find it to swallow pills?" Scores of 1 or 2 were classified as absence of difficulty
- Respondents were classified as having treatment satisfaction if they scored ≥4 (on an ordinal scale from 1 to 5) in response to the question: "Overall, how satisfied are you with your current HIV medication?"
- A report of being comfortable discussing health concerns with HCP was defined as a response of "Very" comfortable" or "Comfortable" (vs "Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable," "Uncomfortable," or "Very uncomfortable")
- Analyses: prevalence estimates computed and compared with x^2 tests at P < 0.05

Results

Figure 1. Characteristics of the Study Population in 25 Countries

Variable	Categories	Distribution	
Self-reported virologic status	Indeterminate (114)	5%	, o
	Nonsuppressed (505)	21%	, D
	Suppressed (1770)	74%	D
Age	<50 (1690)	71%	, o
	50+ (699)	29%	D
Gender	Men (1623)	68%	, o
	Other gender (70)	3%	, D
	Women (696)	29%	D
Year of HIV diagnosis	2017 to 2019 (548)	23%	, o
	2010 to 2016 (913)	38%	, D
	Pre-2010 (928)	39%	D
Region	Northern America (520)	22%	, o
	Europe (1119)	47%	, D
	Latin America (221)	9%	, D
	Asia (230)	10%	, D
	Australia (120)	5%	, D
	South Africa (179)	7%	Ď

Mean (SD) of age was 41.2 (12.2) years in the pooled sample from 25 countries

Most of the study population reported being:

- Virally suppressed (74%)
- Younger (age <50 y, 71%)
- Men (68%)
- Diagnosed prior to 2017 (77%)
- White (58.3%)

Figure 3. Adjusted Odds Ratios of the Relationship Between Various Treatment Challenges Figure 2. Percentage of PLHIV From 25 Countries Who Reported Various Treatment Challenges and Poor Health Outcomes Among PLHIV From 25 Countries, Adjusted for Age, Gender, *P<0.05 between the United States and Canada. Education, Ethnicity, Region, and HIV Duration (N=2389) 58.5% (234/400) OUTCOME: SUBOPTIMAL ADHERENCE Self-reported viral suppression 64.2% (77/120) 1.50 [1.23-1.83] 1.87 [1.50-2.33] 2.21 [1.79-2.72] 2.31 [1.88-2.83] 2.51 [2.05-3.08] Experience of side effects (yes vs. no) Ever disguised HIV medication (yes vs. no) 74.1% (1770/2389) Viral load & HIV medication limits my day-to-day life (yes vs. no) Daily pills cause me stress or anxiety (yes vs. no) comorbid Difficulty swallowing pills (yes vs. no) conditions 50.8% (203/400) OUTCOME: SUBOPTIMAL OVERALL HEALTH 1.88 [1.58-2.23] 1.43 [1.20-1.72] 1.90 [1.57-2.29] 1.93 [1.61-2.31] 2.10 [1.75-2.52] Experience difficulty swallowing pills 54.2% (65/120) Experience of side effects (ves vs. no) Ever disguised HIV medication (yes vs. no) 33.1% (790/2389) HIV medication limits my day-to-day life (yes vs. no) Daily pills cause me stress or anxiety (yes vs. no) Difficulty swallowing pills (yes vs. no) As long as my HIV stays suppressed, I would OUTCOME: SUBOPTIMAL MENTAL HEALTH 57.8% (231/400) 1.62 [1.37-1.92] 1.57 [1.31-1.89] Experience of side effects (yes vs. no) prefer not having to take HIV medication every 48.3% (58/120) Ever disguised HIV medication (yes vs. no) 1.57 [1.31-1.69] 1.79 [1.48-2.15] 1.95 [1.63-2.34] 2.59 [2.15-3.11] HIV medication limits my day-to-day life (yes vs. no) 54.7% (1306/2389) dav Daily pills cause me stress or anxiety (yes vs. no) Difficulty swallowing pills (yes vs. no) OUTCOME: SUBOPTIMAL PHYSICAL HEALTH Psychosocial 63.0% (252/400) 1.74 [1.46-2.06] 1.39 [1.15-1.67] Experience of side effects (yes vs. no) Ever hidden or disguised HIV medication to & privacy Ever disguised HIV medication (yes vs. no) 68.3% (82/120) 1.93 [1.59-2.33] 1.62 [1.35-1.94] 2.32 [1.93-2.79] avoid sharing HIV status HIV medication limits my day-to-day life (yes vs. no) concerns 57.9% (1383/2389) Daily pills cause me stress or anxiety (yes vs. no) Difficulty swallowing pills (yes vs. no) OUTCOME: SUBOPTIMAL SEXUAL HEALTH 1.41 [1.19-1.68] 1.80 [1.50-2.16] 1.66 [1.37-2.01] Experience of side effects (yes vs. no) I worry that having to take pills every day 44.0% (176/400) Ever disguised HIV medication (yes vs. no) means a greater chance of revealing my HIV 35.8% (43/120) HIV medication limits my day-to-day life (yes vs. no) 1.41 [1.18-1.70] 1.97 [1.63-2.37] Daily pills cause me stress or anxiety (yes vs. no) status to others 37.9% (906/2389) Difficulty swallowing pills (yes vs. no) OUTCOME: TREATMENT DISSATISFACTION 1.70 [1.41-2.03] 1.87 [1.54-2.28] Experience of side effects (yes vs. no) 48.0% (192/400) Ever disguised HIV medication (yes vs. no) I worry about forgetting to take my daily HIV 2.21 [1.82-2.69] 1.88 [1.56-2.28] HIV medication limits my day-to-day life (yes vs. no) 35.8% (43/120) medication or taking it later than planned * Daily pills cause me stress or anxiety (yes vs. no) 47.0% (1123/2389) 3.77 3.10-4.58 Difficulty swallowing pills (yes vs. no) Adjusted odds ratios Adherence 41.0% (164/400) Having to remember to take my HIV medication anxiety 34.2% (41/120) There was a positive association between the various treatment challenges and negative self-reported outcomes. Difficulty swallowing every day causes me stress or anxiety pills, for example, increased the odds of all negative outcomes assessed by about 2 to 3 times 33.3% (795/2389) Side effects, disguising/hiding HIV medications, the perception HIV medication limits day-to-day life, and perceived stress from daily dosing schedule, all were associated with poorer health outcomes among PLHIV 41.5% (166/400) Taking my HIV medication limits my day-to-day **Strengths and Limitations** 32.5% (39/120) 28.9% (691/2389) • This study's strength is its use of a standardized instrument to collect information from PLHIV with verified diagnoses across 25 countries, covering every continent Major limitations include non-probabilistic sampling and use of online questionnaires, which 44.3% (177/400) Taking pills for HIV every day is a link to some may limit generalizability. Only associations can be inferred from the cross-sectional design 33.3% (40/120) bad memories from my past * 35.1% (839/2389) Emotional challenges **Conclusions** 68.3% (273/400) • Despite the majority reporting undetectable viral loads, participants also reported several Taking pills for HIV every day is a daily 49.2% (59/120) reminder of HIV in my life ' challenges with daily oral ART 58.4% (1394/2389) Difficulty swallowing, side effects, and emotional concerns, such as fear of disclosure, adherence anxiety, and the daily reminder of HIV, were all associated with poorer 50 100 health outcomes • Increased flexibility of ART delivery may help meet diverse patient needs and improve ■ USA (N = 400) ■ Canada (N = 120) ■ Pooled global sample (N = 2389) aspects of quality of life

ART-related challenges included difficulty swallowing pills (33.1%), adherence anxiety (33.3%), pills as daily reminder of HIV (58.4%), and fear of disclosure (57.9%) Privacy and emotional challenges were generally similar in the North American subpopulation

Acknowledgments: We deeply thank survey participants and community groups that helped with enrolment. Statistical analyses and medical writing were supported by Zatum LLC.

References: 1. Okoli et al. Prev Chronic Dis. 2020;17:190359. 2. de Los Rios et al. Popul Med. 2020;2:23.

IDWeek[™] 2020; October 21-25, 2020; Virtual



1045



Presenting author: Patricia de los Rios; patricia.x.delosrios@viivhealthcare.com