

The experienced positive and negative influence of HIV on the quality of life of people living with HIV and key populations vulnerable to HIV: a qualitative study



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Aim

Our qualitative study aims to explore the experienced influence of HIV on the Quality of life of people living with HIV and key populations vulnerable to HIV in the Netherlands.

Methods

- In-depth interviews with 28 PLHIV and 12 people of key populations (i.e., people who inject drugs and men who have sex with men (MSM))
- The thematic analysis consisted of 6 phases according to Braun and Clark

Conclusions

- This study explored the positive influence of HIV on QoL in addition to a negative influence.
- Positive meaningful experiences of HIV made living with HIV easier, and ultimately resulted in a positive influence on their QoL.
- It remains important to support HIV community organization in their efforts to providing guidance to PLHIV and key populations vulnerable to HIV in accepting and positively adjusting to their HIV status as this may ultimately result in a positive influence on their QoL.

Results

Theme 1: Positive meaningful experiences of HIV on QoL

Appreciating life & health

I think, HIV made me respect and appreciate life and love even more [female, 42, heterosexual, living with HIV for more than 20 years]

Social support and sense of belonging

The HIV community is a very close-knit community and I have the idea that I can and do something really meaningful for it. [female, 58, heterosexual, living with HIV for more than 20 years]

Appreciation of the lifeline ART offers

I'm very fortunate that I live in the Netherlands and that I live now and not 20 or 30 years ago. [male, 38, bisexual, living with HIV for 6 years]

Managing the predominant influence of HIV

It [PrEP] is fantastic! It [PrEP] should have been here ten years ago [male, 52, gay, living with HIV for more than 20 years]

Theme 2: Life dominated by HIV

Being constantly dependent on ART

I'm screwed because of that dependency [on ART]. [male, 61, gay, living with HIV for 20 years]

Continuous struggles of disclosing HIV

Like, if you have a date... That is something that I struggle with now I have HIV myself. "Shall I tell them immediately?" [male, 31, gay, living with HIV for 6 years]

Ongoing fear related to HIV

I grew up believing that it was not possible to have sex with someone without a condom... sex entails a certain kind of danger. [male, 41, gay, key population]

Unyielding HIV-related self-stigma and stigma

The strange thing is, I notice these [stigmatizing attitudes] especially in healthcare... From someone in the medical world you would expect differently [female, 58, heterosexual, living with HIV for more than 20 years]



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