

HIV/NCD Comorbidity in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Need for a Synergistic Health Care Model

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Our aim is to assess missed opportunities of HIV/NCD (non-communicable disease) testing among older South Africans. A pilot study, using the Testing & Risk History Calendar, with 30 participants (aged 50-plus, 7 HIV-positive/23 HIV-negative) was conducted in two sites in South Africa. We calculate the prevalence of self-reported comorbidities, and the frequency of HIV and/or NCD screening. Overall, over half of the sample had high blood pressure, and another 20% had diabetes; about 15% reported both. Despite extensive NCD care engagement, the majority of HIV testing was for those who reported being HIV-positive. HIV tests were generally provider initiated due to the patient showing HIV symptoms, rather than part of routine care. Routine testing opportunities for early HIV detection are not occurring among older adults. A synergistic, preventative health care model that encourages routine testing for HIV and NCDs concurrently would benefit the health of older South Africans.