



A Scoping Review of the Longitudinal Mental Health Trajectory in Women Diagnosed with HIV During Pregnancy in Francistown, Botswana

A Scoping Review of the
Longitudinal

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45

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Abstract

An HIV diagnosis during pregnancy is a significant life event with potential long-term psychological consequences. In Botswana, a high-prevalence country, the mental health impact on women receiving this diagnosis antenatally is a critical public health concern. This review focuses on women diagnosed in the Francistown district to map evidence on their longitudinal mental health trajectory. The purpose was to systematically map and synthesise available literature on the longitudinal mental health trajectory of women diagnosed with HIV during pregnancy in Francistown, Botswana. The objective was to identify the nature and scope of evidence, key themes, and research gaps regarding their psychological wellbeing over time. This scoping review followed the Joanna Briggs Institute methodology. A systematic search was conducted across multiple electronic databases and grey literature sources. Studies of any design reporting on the mental health of this specific cohort were considered. Data were charted and analysed thematically. The review identified a limited but significant body of evidence. A prominent theme was the high prevalence of perinatal depression and anxiety following diagnosis. The trajectory was often characterised by initial acute distress, with longer-term mental health outcomes showing a complex interplay with stigma, disclosure concerns, and social support. Existing evidence indicates that women diagnosed with HIV during pregnancy in this setting face a substantial and sustained mental health burden. The longitudinal perspective reveals that psychological distress is not merely an acute reaction but can persist, influenced by ongoing psychosocial challenges. Further longitudinal research is needed to understand the decades-long mental health trajectory and the efficacy of interventions. Clinical practice should integrate sustained mental health screening and support into routine antenatal and postnatal care for this cohort. HIV, pregnancy, diagnosis, mental health, longitudinal, Botswana, scoping review. This review consolidates existing evidence on the longitudinal mental health trajectory of a specific, under-reviewed cohort, providing a foundation for future research and highlighting a need for integrated mental health care within prevention of mother-to-child transmission services.

Keywords: *HIV diagnosis, pregnancy, mental health trajectory, longitudinal study, Sub-Saharan Africa, perinatal period, Botswana*

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