

## **PREVALENCE OF HIV/AIDS IN NIGERIA**

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Nigeria has the second highest number of people living with HIV in the world. Since 1986 when the first case of the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) was reported in Nigeria, the disease has grown to epidemic proportions with the prevalence of its causative agent - the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) being observed to be steadily rising since the early days of the epidemic. Therefore it is important to talk about the prevalence of HIV infection in Nigeria.

The aim of study: to provide information on HIV prevalence in Nigeria and to highlight the factors that drive the epidemic, as well as an analysis of the degree of prevalence in the six geographical zones of Nigeria; North Central (NC), North East (NE), North West (NW), South East (SE), South South (SS) and South West (SW). HIV prevalence surveys by clinic of the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital were conducted among the antenatal clinic attendees in Nigeria being considered to be a homogenous community of persons with steady sexual partners. Included in the survey were pregnant women aged between 15 to 49 years of age from rural and urban areas across all the geographical zones.

Results. Majority of those in the survey were in the 20 to 29 years age group (58,4 %), with the least population (2,4 %) aged 40 to 49 years old. Most of the women were married (96,4 %) and this makes the population fairly homogenous in all the zones. The prevalence of HIV has grown steadily from 1,8 % in 1991 to 4,1 % in 2011. The main mode of HIV transmission in Nigeria is heterosexual contact. There are many factors that contribute to increasing rates of HIV in Nigeria, such as poverty, gender disempowerment, social and financial inequality, social and religious norms, and political and social changes (e.g., labor migration and ignorance).

Conclusion. The study found that HIV prevalence was highest in NC Zone (7,5 %) followed by SS zone (6,5 %). The NW zone had the lowest prevalence of 2,1 %. The epidemic has grown beyond the high-risk groups to affect the general population. Based on the national prevalence of 4,1 %, it is estimated that 3,1 million people are living with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria in 2011.