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Clients' satisfaction with HIV treatment services in Bamenda, Cameroon: A cross-sectional study

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Background: Clients have explicit desires or requests for services when visiting hospitals; inadequate discovery of their needs may result in dissatisfaction. Patient satisfaction influences retention in HIV care, adherence to HAART and serves as determinant to HIV suppression. This study's objectives were to quantify clients' satisfaction with HIV services in Bamenda and determine relationship between satisfaction and clients' socio-demographic/structural characteristics.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted on HIV-positive patients followed-up, on treatment and who consulted in the Bamenda Regional Hospital treatment centre between July and August 2014. Participants consent was sought and data collected on client's level of satisfaction to staff-patient-communication, staff attitudes, privacy and confidentiality and staffing and amenities situations in the hospital. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire interviewer-administered by investigator and trained health personnel. Collected data was analyzed using Epi Info version 3.5.4 and clients' satisfaction measured using frequencies and percentages.

Results: A total of 384 participants took part in this study and their median age was 37 years (IQR: 29-46). 274 (71.4%) participants were females. Overall satisfaction with HIV services was 91.2% and participants reported less satisfaction with overall staffing and amenities situation of the center (3.6%). In the multivariate analysis, only being female, employed and perceiving high number of nurses working at the treatment center remained significant predictors of overall satisfaction with HIV services.

Conclusion: A high proportion of participants expressed satisfaction with HIV services. However, some dissatisfaction is masked in this high satisfaction level. This dissatisfaction underscores need to improve staff attitudes, staff-patient-communication, employ more staff and build better patient facilities. Future studies need to focus on assessing long-term progression of satisfaction levels with services and determinants of satisfaction involving larger samples in many treatment centers.

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