

**Factors Associated with Retention in HIV Care Among Women Accessing Healthcare
from Amolatar Health Centre IV in Amolatar District**

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ABSTRACT

Background: Retention in antiretroviral therapy (ART) care is a key indicator of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) treatment success as it improves adherence, critical for better treatment outcomes and prevention of drug resistance. This study focuses on the critical issues of patient retention in HIV care, a vital factor for favorable outcomes in HIV treatment. Although antiretroviral treatment prolongs survival and improves the quality of life, challenges in adherence and retention in care persist, especially in high-burden regions like Africa. **Objective:** The general objective of this study was to determine level of and factors associated with retention in HIV care among women accessing healthcare from Amolatar Health Centre IV in Amolatar District.

Methods: A facility-based cross-sectional study design was used, data was collected using a interviewer administered structured questionnaire. The study included 153 HIV-positive women who had been enrolled in care for at least 6 months. Uni-variate analysis was used to describe the study variables. Bi-variate, and multivariate analyses were conducted to explore associations between various independent variables that included client related factors, social-economic factors, drug related factors and structural factors and HIV care retention status.

Results: Among 153 women in the study, 37.91% were retained. Factors positively associated with retention in multivariate analysis included secondary education (AOR=5.66, 95% CI: 1.28-24.8, $p=0.022$), not missing appointments (AOR=2.56, 95% CI: 1.13-5.78 $p=0.024$), and no TB development (AOR=2.53, 95% CI: 1.09-5.84 $p=0.030$), Women who did not experience mental breakdown at first diagnosis were less likely to be retained (AOR=0.37, 95% CI: 0.16-0.86 $p=0.021$).

Conclusions and Recommendations: The 6-month retention rate in HIV care among women receiving care from Amolatar health Centre IV is low. Factors significantly associated with higher retention rates included secondary education, consistent appointment attendance, absence of tuberculosis development. Additionally, women without a history of mental breakdowns were less likely to be retained, indicating a need for enhanced mental health support in HIV care strategies.

Keywords: *Factors, Associated, Retention, HIV Care, Women Accessing Healthcare, Health Centre IV, and Amolatar District.*