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Kenya: HIV/AIDS

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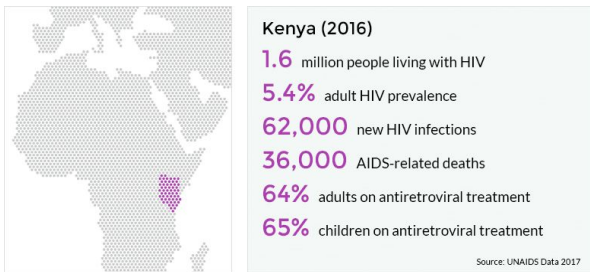
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HIV/AIDS in Kenya

Background:

Kenya is a coast country in East Africa. The biggest public health problem in Kenya is HIV/AIDS, it is also the number one cause of death (Centers For Disease Control, 2016). The population of Kenya is around 50 million people, with no one race/ethnicity in the majority, instead it is mostly made up of a collection of indigenous peoples, some



Europeans, and people from the bordering countries, Somalia, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania (Okoth,Ndaloh, 2006). Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya are all allies for the bettering of each individual country and bettering each other. Somalia, however, has had tensions with Kenya in the past (Okoth,Ndaloh, 2006). Kenya is a democratic republic where the government, senate, and National Assembly, all hold legislative power. They hold open elections for the presidency with ballots. An important thing to note is the in the Kenyan Constitution it states that there cannot be more than two thirds of the elected officials can be of the same gender, promoting a strive for gender equality (Novak, 2018). However, Kenya's government is seen as corrupt, with the judicial, executive, and legislative branches have secret under the table ties. Rather than doing what is good for the people, they are making deals with themselves to better government officials lives rather than the lives of the people. The private health care system is the most trusted by locals, with even people at and below the poverty line using it. Despite this, the life expectancy for a person in

Kenya is only 55, what plays into this low number is the economy (Okoth,Ndaloh, 2006). Despite the strides towards gender equality, homosexual acts are illegal, which makes it harder for LGBTQ members to seek help if they contract it.

Issue:

HIV/AIDS, although seeing a decline in recent years, is still the leading cause of population death (Centers For Disease Control, 2016). Although there are outside resources being used, and the numbers of affected people have decreased, this is still a major issue. In Kenya, the general population is at a greater risk of HIV/AIDS due to amounts of the population affected, however, the most at risk are men who have sex with



men, men who have sex with women, female sex workers, and drug users (Atieno, 2017). People are usually not using condoms when they engage in sexual acts, increasing their chances of contracting HIV/AIDS (Appiah, Tenkorang, Maticka-Tyndale, Appiah, Tenkorang, 2017). In 2016 15.56% of the deaths were due to HIV/AIDS. According to the CDC, in people aged from 15-49, 5.9% of that population has HIV/AIDS (Centers For Disease Control, 2016).

Treatments in Place:

Treatment is available, there are many organizations that other help to those affected by HIV/AIDS. The CDC has programs to help

pregnant women with HIV/AIDs and to circumcise men which is supposed to help reduce the risk of contracting HIV/AIDs. They also offer treatments for those who are already affected (children and adults), and work to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDs, in both children and adults. However, there are limitations to these programs, not enough funding, the people who really need the help cannot always make their way to clinics or pop up clinics where this care can take place. Economic class also affects whether or not a person can get help, in some cases a person does not have to pay for their treatment, but people can not always afford to take off work if they're the sole provider, or one of the main providers of their household (Monroe-Wise, Reisner, Sherr, Ojaka, Mbau, Kisia, Farquhar, 2017).

Solutions:

In order to stop the spread of HIV/AIDs, or drastically decrease it in Kenya, there need to be more organizations in educating the public on HIV/AIDs, how it spreads, and how to receive help, as well as making condoms more readily available. Making homosexual acts legal would also lead to more people getting tested as well as receiving treatment as they would no longer have to hide. Creating programs specifically meant for sex workers, where they would not be discriminated against, could also help in the fight against HIV/AIDs. Health clinics, and pop up clinics need to be more accessible, whether that is creating more clinics or creating easy, fast, and cheap transportation. I think the biggest issue when it comes to HIV/AIDs is that people are not aware of how it is contracted, nor how to prevent contracting it. There have been many strides made in Kenya, but the work is not done.

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