

Support of Professional Nurses Caring for HIV/AIDS Patients, Tshwane District of Gauteng Province, South Africa

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ABSTRACT Professional nurses providing care to patients diagnosed with AIDS related illnesses are identified as a risk group in terms of contracting HIV. They sometimes feel stressed when carrying out their basic tasks of promoting, preventing and maintaining the health of individuals, families and the public. The main objective of the research was to explore and describe the support provided by the hospital, nurse managers and co-workers to the professional nurses when providing AIDS care to patients. Qualitative explorative and descriptive designs were employed. The population comprised of all professional nurses and nurse managers working at the hospital caring for patients diagnosed with HIV/AIDS related illnesses. Ethical clearance was received from University of Venda's ethical research committee. A non-probability purposive sampling method was used to determine the sample of the study. In-depth individual interviews were conducted using un-structured interview guide. Tesch's open coding method of data analysis was used. The findings revealed that professional nurses received ineffective support from the organisation, nurse managers and co-workers when experiencing challenges related to AIDS care. The researcher recommended that further research on this study topic be conducted in other provinces of South Africa for consideration by the DOH.