

Sexual Behaviour, HIV Status, and HIV Risk among Older South Africans

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ABSTRACT The aim of this study was to conduct a secondary analysis on sexual behaviour, HIV status and HIV risk and co-morbidity among older South Africans using the South African 2005 HIV prevalence and behaviour survey. A multistage probability nationally representative sample involving 3795 male and female respondents, aged 50 years or older was selected. About 41.1% had been sexually active in the past 12 months and 35.9% in the past month. Men (63.1%) were significantly more sexually active than women (29.8%). Having more than one sexual partner in the past 12 months was significantly more prevalent among men (4.9%) than among women (0.2%) 50 years and above. The overall HIV prevalence was 5.8% and it was significantly higher among the rural and less educated Black African population group than among the urban, educated and non-Black African population group. Among men the HIV prevalence seemed to decline with age, while HIV prevalence was similar across age groups among women. In multiple regression analysis, older age, being female, rural residence, lower educational level, receiving social grants or pension, and low HIV risk perception were associated with HIV risk behaviour. The study contributes to the understanding of the epidemiology of HIV infection in older individuals which is critical for intervention efforts.