

## Book Review

**HIV and AIDS - An Interdisciplinary Approach to Prevention and Management**  
Vimala Veeraraghavan and Shalini Singh (Eds.).  
*Mosaic Books: New Delhi (1999) Pages: 196.*  
*Price: Rs. 450/-*

In 1981, in USA, it was recognized for the first time the presence of Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV) which at present spread beyond USA and Africa into Europe, Australia and to many Asian countries. There are around 30.6 million people living with HIV/AIDS in the world. Since the start of the epidemic, an estimated 9 million adults and 2.7 million children have died due to this disease. In India HIV was first detected about a decade ago. Since then it has become a serious social and medical problem in India.

Initially in India, HIV was seen as being confined to the so-called high risk groups and to certain geographical areas, but the changing epidemiological data now show that HIV is increasingly reported amongst the general population across the country. The editors have rightly said that given the socio-economic conditions in India and the size of the country, the ever increasing population makes it clear that the problem of HIV/AIDS cannot be the concern of government agencies only. There is a need for collaboration and coordination with various agencies at all levels which alone could help in reducing ignorance about HIV and alleviating the negative social and economic impact of this disease. It is here that intersectoral collaboration with NGOs towards spreading awareness and social mobilization is urgently needed.

This book contains 34 well knitted chapters by social scientists working in the area of HIV/AIDS. This book also tries to explore the problem areas and to find solutions. The book has been divided into three sections. Section first contains two chapters. These chapters try to provide an introduction to the issue of HIV/AIDS and its prevalence. This section also discusses

the surveillance efforts made by the government of India to understand the magnitude of the problem. Section II has twenty-two chapters. This section provides the reader with an insight into the many methods of managing HIV/AIDS cases, the problems involved and the method for proper evaluation. The authors also attempted to discuss the problems faced in terms of the availability of diagnostic tools, problems encountered during treatment, drop-out patients and the efficacy of the Indian systems of Medicine. Section III has ten chapters which discuss the many intervention programs that have been developed to prevent HIV in select groups like women, youth, adolescents, commercial sex workers, and truck drivers.

Behavioural interventions have to be carried on simultaneously along with medical intervention, so that their combined effect could reduce morbidity. While many methods are being tried out in handling the problems of AIDS, there are considerable hurdles faced which included non-uniform methods of diagnosis, problems related to lack of confidentiality, drop-out of patients from the treatment programs, lack of finances, dearth of trained personnel, poor infrastructural facilities, and indifference of health personnel in following universal precautions.

I think this book will serve a reference guide for master's level students, doctoral and post-doctoral students and teachers. This book is also unique as it has contributions from medical personnel, psychologists, social workers, researchers, health management specialists and government officials. This book will definitely generate interest in the behavioural and medical aspects of HIV/AIDS. The editors have done a good job by synthesising such a collection of articles. Both editors and the publisher deserve congratulations for bringing a timely volume.

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