

# **Joint Patient-Provider Decision Making Was Associated With Improvements in Quality of Life and Treatment Satisfaction in the Positive Perspectives 3 Study**

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## **Background**

The Positive Perspectives studies are global surveys that aim to capture the experiences of people living with HIV. These surveys highlight how important it is for people with HIV to have good relationships with their healthcare providers. When patients and doctors work well together, it can lead to better health, like sticking to treatment plans, feeling happier with life, and trusting doctors more. This study looked at how people living with HIV interact with their healthcare providers, focusing on trust, communication, and involvement in care, and how these factors vary by viral suppression status, gender, and age.

## **What treatment was studied here?**

This study looked at how people living with HIV are involved in making decisions about their treatment, especially when it comes to choosing their treatment regimens. It explored how being part of the decision-making process affects their health and satisfaction with treatment. Instead of focusing on a specific drug, the study examined the benefits of shared decision-making in HIV care.

## **What was the purpose of this study?**

The study aimed to understand how people living with HIV interact with their healthcare providers, focusing on trust, communication, and involvement in care. The study assessed if

there are differences in these interactions based on whether the virus is suppressed, gender, and age, to help improve HIV care.

### **Who took part in the study and how was the treatment studied?**

The study involved 698 people living with HIV who were recruited from HIV clinics and support groups across 16 countries. Participants included a mix of genders, with 40% female, 55% male, 2% transgender, 2% non-binary, and 1% other or missing. Ages ranged from 50 years and under (61%) to over 50 years (39%). Most had an undetectable viral load (71%), whereas 29% had a detectable viral load. The study used surveys to understand how people feel about their health and their involvement in HIV care.

### **What are the research findings?**

The study found that most people felt involved in their care decisions, with 75% saying they were part of the process and 60% making decisions together with their healthcare provider about their HIV treatment regimen. Those who felt involved in treatment decisions reported better mental, sexual, physical, and overall health. For example, 49% of those involved reported good mental health, compared with 35% who weren't involved, and 60% of those involved reported good physical health, compared with 45% who weren't involved. Trust in healthcare providers was high, but people with unsuppressed viral loads often felt unheard and found it hard to start conversations with their healthcare providers. Both men and women showed positive engagement, but other gender identities felt less engaged. For example, other gender identities reported less trust in healthcare providers compared with men and women, and only 40% felt that their healthcare provider checks on their satisfaction with treatment. Engagement between healthcare providers and patients was similar across different age groups.

### **What does this mean for people with HIV?**

For people living with HIV, the study shows how important it is to be involved in treatment decisions. Being part of the decision-making process can lead to better mental, sexual, physical, and overall health.

### **Conclusions**

The study concludes that when people with HIV are involved in making decisions about their care, they tend to have better health outcomes. Even though trust in healthcare providers is high, some people feel like their voices aren't heard and struggle to start conversations. The study suggests that healthcare providers should work on improving communication and encourage shared decision-making to help people with HIV achieve better health.

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