

Providers' Perspectives on Social Determinants of Health That Impact Patients' Engagement in HIV Care

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Introduction. Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection imposes threats to physical health and psychological well-being and requires effective long-term management to achieve viral suppression. A patient's ability to seek care is largely influenced by social determinants of health (SDOH) and the provider's ability to help manage social needs. This study aims to elucidate how SDOH impact the provider's practice and well-being. We also assessed how provider burnout plays a role in the patient-provider relationship.

Methods. This cross-sectional qualitative study was conducted with 86 HIV providers across the United States that completed an electronic survey about their perceptions of SDOH, barriers to social needs screening, and their personal experience of burnout. Providers identified several unmet social needs, such as financial instability, transportation, and appointment logistics, as major barriers for the patients to engage in HIV care.

Results. The lack of resources and insufficient time were barriers preventing clinicians from inquiring about social needs. Providers from the West and Midwest were more likely to report burnout compared to providers from other regions. Provider burnout was significantly associated with feeling emotional exhaustion.

Conclusions. These findings suggest the importance of improving provider well-being as well as optimizing practices to effectively bridge the community with social services in our quest to end the HIV epidemic.

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