

# PREVALENCE OF HIV INDICATOR CONDITIONS IN PATIENTS WITH LATE DIAGNOSIS OF HIV: 25 YEARS ON, ARE WE STILL MISSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EARLIER CARE?

## Authors:

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**Background:** This study aimed to evaluate prior prevalence of HIV Indicator Conditions (HIVIC) in patients with late diagnosis HIV.

**Methods:** We conducted a retrospective cohort study at a large healthcare network in Melbourne, Australia to evaluate patients diagnosed with HIV between 2015 and 2025. Patients with late diagnosis HIV (defined by CD4<350cells/μL) were compared to those with CD4≥350 at presentation. The European AIDS Clinical Society guidelines on indicator guided testing were utilised to identify HIVIC in electronic health records, which may have represented a missed opportunity for earlier diagnosis. Outcome measures included patient demographics, diagnostic setting and presence of HIVIC. Statistical analysis was performed using chi-squared testing and two-proportion z-tests. Results from 2015-2025 were compared to an earlier study performed at the same hospital network between 2000-2014 to investigate patterns of diagnostic practice over a 25-year period.

**Results:** Of 247 patients with HIV, 114 (48%) met criteria for late diagnosis. More late presenters were born overseas (73% vs 42%, p<0.005), however demographics were otherwise similar; majority male (73% vs 78%, p=0.372) and of similar age (mean 41.9 vs 41.6 years, p=0.864). Of 114 patients with late presentation, 62 (54%) had one or more HIVIC which would have triggered testing according to guidelines; of these, 37 (32%) had at least two and 8 (7%) had three or more. Most common HIVIC included unexplained weight loss (22%), Hepatitis B (14%) and Sexually Transmitted Infection (13%). Twenty-three patients had HIVIC diagnosed ≥12 months before HIV testing was performed, demonstrating no significant improvement when compared with screening behaviours 10 years prior (20% 2015-2025 vs 25% 2000-2014, p=0.405).

**Conclusion:** Most individuals presenting with CD4 count <350cells/μL had an HIVIC prior to diagnosis, presenting a missed opportunity for earlier care. 25 years on, there is still a need to educate clinicians on indicator-based testing guidelines.

## Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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