

## INTRODUCTION:

Early HIV diagnosis and Early ART initiation to people living with HIV remain the sole solution to global public health calamity of HIV. To this end, this study was carried out to identify factors associated with initiation of ARTs to persons living with HIV at AIC –Kampala.

The study used a cross-section study design, where 134 respondents were interviewed. They were purposively selected among HIV positive clients in care at AIC-Kampala. These entailed; 67 people not on ART, with CD4 <500cells/dl (cases) and 67 people on ART (controls).

The researcher administered pretested questionnaires to collect information. Data was entered into the computer using a data entry screen which was designed in EPI-info and later exported to SPSS for analysis. Bivariate analysis done ascertain the influence factors on ART initiation. Further, a multivariate analysis was done to establish association of significant factors from bivariate analysis on ART initiation among PLWHIV.

The results show that of 134 people included in the study, 76 (56.7%) were females and 58 (43.3%) were males. The results of the study showed that factors which statistically significantly influence ART initiation among PLWHIV entail awareness about early ART initiation (OR= 5.37, 95% C. I = 1.22 – 23.65, P=0.026), disclosure of HIV status (OR= 9.40, 95% C. I = 3.52 – 25.08, P<0.001), conceived idea of ART initiation (OR= 3.99, 95% C. I =1.48 – 10.79, P= 0.006) and WHO clinical staging (OR= 30.61, 95% C. I = 1.51 – 620.1, P=0.026).

Research findings show that initiation of persons living with on ART is associated with some factors and based on the finding of the study, the researcher recommends; intensified creation of awareness on the importance of early ART initiation, health facilities to ensure that drugs are regularly available, and health workers to encourage persons living with HIV to disclose their HIV positive status in order to

reduce stigma.