

7. Mental Health

Mental health conditions are common among people living with, at risk or affected by HIV, often occurring at significantly higher rates than in the general population.

PLHIV are significantly more likely to have suicidal thoughts compared with general populations. And also, ageing and older PLHIV are more likely to experience mental health conditions (e.g. due to social stigma) and decline in neurocognitive performance and they are at higher risk of developing of non-communicable diseases including depression. Furthermore, Mental health conditions are associated with lower adherence to HIV treatment, increased risk behaviors and lower engagement with HIV prevention.

Additionally, key populations also frequently encounter stigma, discrimination, and social marginalization, which, combined with their susceptibility to HIV and violations of their rights, contribute to increase emotional distress and mental health issues.

Because the AIDS pandemic cannot end without addressing these psychosocial factors, integrated service approaches and universal health coverage are essential. Therefore, routine mental health screening and management must be provided together with HIV services to key population and people living with HIV, to optimize their health and HIV outcomes.

Reference

- MAM SOP for mental health and drug use_ April 2024 (updated in July 2026)