

Assessing community attitude towards home-based care for people with AIDS (PWAs) in Kenya.

Abstract:

This paper presents data on an assessment of community attitudes toward HIV/AIDS and home based care. The findings indicate that due to inadequate information about the disease and care expectations, people were ambivalent toward the sick and in some instances out-right rejection prevailed. This formed the basis for their preference for institutional based care as opposed to home based care. This was further compounded by the economic status of the household/family. Sheer poverty militates against providing adequate home care in as much as families may be willing to do so. It also confirms that one may perhaps be too taken in by the romanticized idea of unswerving community support. This may further relegate the burden to the primary unit, the family and especially the women who ultimately carry the load with limited resources. This emphasizes the need to initially share the issue with the community in order to work out the mechanisms that will lessen the burden of, and facilitate home care. Training in the care of AIDS patients is crucial yet lacking at the family and community level. Whereas care, counseling and social support are particularly important prerequisites for home-based care, these were conspicuously lacking. Very few caregivers had appropriate training and were worried about their lack of knowledge and yet they had to care for patients. It was evident that they lacked a framework that would provide the capacity to facilitate home care. Such a framework would bridge the gap between the noble concept of home-based care and the realities of home based care.