

**HIV/AIDS related knowledge, attitude and practice of health workers  
towards pregnant women in the labour wards in Magu district.**

**Stella Kasindi**

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**University of Dar es Salaam. School of Health Sciences, 2000**

HTV/AIDS continues to be one of the prominent killer diseases despite the fact that attempts are still going on to find a definitive cure for the condition. Sub Saharan Africa has the highest numbers of patients, including Tanzania (UNAIDS, 1998). Care of these patients, lies on the health workers, as well as family members, when providing symptomatic treatment and support. Health workers also take care of people infected with the disease, but who may not have attained the full-blown disease, such patients are only detected by blood tests. The lack of cure, combined with the fact that the disease can be transmitted in workplace situations, is a major fact that results in changing the way of handling patients in this era of AIDS pandemic, directly affecting patient care. HTV/AIDS related knowledge, attitude and practice of health workers towards pregnant women in the labour wards in Magu district was done in the context of such situation. The studied population was health workers in the labour wards, delivering patients, chosen because in the labour wards, these workers encounter more blood and body fluids, which are a potential source of the virus if, infected. In-depth interviews to the in-charges were administered as well as observations and patients' interviews. The results show that health workers are knowledgeable (92.3%) on the modes of HIV transmission, but this is not associated to the resultant attitude. However, most workers (60.2%) had positive attitude to the pregnant women in the labour wards. The workers had high risk-perception (91.2%) as well as fear (73.6%) especially when they did not have protective equipment. Availability and use of protective gear was also found to be inadequate in the labour wards, when delivering pregnant women. It can be seen that training of health workers on the workplace precautions still needs increased efforts.