

## Patient preferences regarding the dress code, conduct and resources used by doctors during consultations in the public healthcare sector in Bloemfontein, Free State

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**Abstract** (Full text available online at [www.tandfonline.com/ojfp](http://www.tandfonline.com/ojfp))

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**Background:** The doctor–patient relationship is important in determining the quality of healthcare provided. This study aimed to identify patient preferences regarding dress code, conduct and resources used by doctors during consultations in the public healthcare sector, Bloemfontein. Information from this study can be of benefit in determining policies and dress codes within hospitals and medical schools.

**Methods:** This was a descriptive, cross-sectional study. Self-administered anonymous questionnaires were distributed at Bloemfontein's National District Hospital to patients 18 years and older, waiting in the pharmacy and consultation queues.

**Results:** Of the 500 questionnaires distributed 410 were analysed. Patients preferred doctors to wear formal attire. For female doctors this included a neat blouse (77.9%), smart pants (62.5%) or straight-cut jeans (51.4%) and flat pumps (56.3%). Patients preferred male doctors to wear collared shirts (52.4% and 57.6% for long- and short-sleeved shirts, respectively) with smart pants (66.8%) or straight-cut jeans (45.9%), and smart shoes (70.3%). Patients did not condone eating and drinking by doctors during consultations; work-related calls were deemed acceptable. The use of technological resources was not preferred.

**Conclusion:** Patients in the public healthcare sector prefer a formal, professional consulting environment that is determined largely by the doctor's attire and conduct during the consultation.

**Keywords:** dress-code, patient preferences, professional attire, professional behaviour, technology use

## HIV-related knowledge and practices: a cross-sectional study among adults aged 50 years and above in Botswana

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**Background:** Older adults in Botswana have been shown to be sexually active and engage in risky sexual activities that make them vulnerable to HIV infection. In order to implement meaningful interventions to address older adults' HIV and AIDS concerns it is important to understand how much knowledge they have concerning HIV and AIDS and practices. This study explored the knowledge of HIV and AIDS and sexual practices of 609 older adults in Botswana.

**Methods:** The study was cross-sectional and used a survey design. A total of 609 older adults were recruited using respondent-driven sampling (RDS) from four purposively selected health districts and interviewed on their individual HIV and AIDS-related knowledge and practices. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and multivariate logistic regression.

**Results:** Although knowledge of HIV and AIDS was high (95.7%), knowledge of HIV infection through blood transfusion, transmission from mother to child, or sharing needles or syringes was lacking. Only 72% of males and 23.2% of females know that having fewer partners and avoiding blood transfusions (71% of males and 44.3% of females) can minimise risks of HIV infection. Age, marital status and employment status significantly predicted knowledge of transmission ( $p < 0.05$ ), while sex significantly predicted knowledge of prevention and control methods.

**Conclusion:** The study concludes that age-appropriate and culturally relevant education and training of older adults are necessary for the prevention and control of HIV infection.

**Keywords:** Botswana, HIV, knowledge, older adults, practices