

Ageing with HIV

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | International relations

Why in News?

Recently the Lancet HIV Commission on Ageing released its 2026 report, highlighting the growing number of older people living with HIV and the need to adapt health systems.

- In 2025, around 11.5 million (29%) people living with HIV were aged 50 years and above.
- This number is projected to rise to 20.2 million by 2040, representing 51% of all people living with HIV.
- About 96% of these older people are expected to live in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).
- **Key Reasons highlighted -**
 - Antiretroviral therapy (ART) has enabled people who acquired HIV earlier in life to survive and reach older age.
 - At the same time, older adults continue to acquire HIV and may receive a diagnosis later in life.
 - HIV prevention and testing programmes often remain focused on younger populations.
- **Major Concerns -**
 - Delayed diagnosis due to the perception that older people are at low risk.
 - Ageism and stigma can discourage testing and disclosure.
 - Healthcare workers may be less likely to discuss sexual health and HIV testing with older adults.
- Older people may also face multiple chronic conditions such as
 - Hypertension
 - Diabetes
 - Obesity
 - Depression and reduced mobility
 - Managing multiple medicines can result in polypharmacy and make treatment more complex.
- **African context -** HIV risk varies according to gender, education, socioeconomic conditions and location.
 - Widowed women recorded the highest HIV prevalence in the study at 30.8%.
- **Measures suggested**
 - Integrate HIV services with general healthcare and NCD services.
 - Make HIV testing available through chronic disease services.

- Include mental health and age-related conditions in HIV care.
- Focus on functional ability and physiological health, rather than age alone.
- Reduce the need for older patients to visit multiple separate clinics.

Reference

[Down To Earth| Ageing with HIV](#)

