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**A MODEL TO SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL NURSES CARING
FOR PATIENTS DIAGNOSED WITH HIV/AIDS-RELATED
ILLNESSES IN TSHWANE DISTRICT, GAUTENG PROVINCE**

by

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ABSTRACT

The AIDS epidemic is a global crisis which constitutes one of the most serious challenges to the development and social progress in Southern Africa. The AIDS epidemic is eroding development gains, undermining economies, threatening security and destabilizing society. Professional nurses providing care to patients diagnosed with HIV/AIDS-related illnesses are identified as a risk group in terms of contracting HIV. They sometimes feel stressed when carrying out their basic tasks of promoting, preventing and maintaining the health of individuals, families and the public. The purpose of this study was to develop a model for supporting professional nurses who are caring for patients with HIV/AIDS-related illnesses at Steve Biko Hospital, Tshwane District in Gauteng Province. Qualitative, explorative and descriptive research designs were used to investigate the challenges and support experienced by professional nurses when caring for patients who are admitted at the hospital with HIV/AIDS-related illnesses. The study population consisted of all professional nurses working at Steve Biko Academic Hospital caring for patients diagnosed with HIV/AIDS-related illnesses. Ethical considerations were ensured throughout the research. A non-probability convenience sampling method was used to determine the sample of the study. The sample size of participants interviewed was determined by data saturation. In-depth, individual interviews were conducted using an unstructured interview guide. Data were analysed by using Tesch's open-coding method. The findings of the study revealed that professional nurses experienced physical and psychological challenges resulting from caring for patients diagnosed with HIV/AIDS-related illnesses. The findings further revealed that professional nurses providing HIV/AIDS care received insufficient support from the organization, nurse managers and co-workers. The major concept "effective support" was identified, followed by model development for supporting professional nurses. An effective support model structure was validated and proved to be authentic, useful and applicable to the HIV/AIDS care.

KEY CONCEPTS

- ☞ Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)
- ☞ HIV/AIDS-Related Illnesses
- ☞ Professional Nurses
- ☞ Challenges
- ☞ Effective Support Model