

Health sector-based stigma and discrimination: Evaluation of attitudes and practices of health care providers toward HIV+ patients in Tanzania

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Understanding HIV/AIDS-related stigma and discrimination

Stigma:¹

a real or perceived negative response to a person or persons by individuals, community or society...characterized by rejection, denial, discrediting, disregarding, underrating and social distance

Discrimination:²

any measure entailing any arbitrary distinction among persons depending on their confirmed or suspected HIV serostatus or state of health

- (1) Health Development Networks (HDN) and Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS. 2004. 11th International Conference for People Living with HIV/AIDS. Kampala, Uganda. Oct 2004
- (2) UNAIDS 2000. Protocol for the identification of discrimination against people living with HIV. UNAIDS Best Practice Collection: 1-44.



Objectives:

To assess:

1. HIV/AIDS-related Knowledge
2. Attitudes toward patients living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs)
3. Perceived risk of infection
4. Discriminatory practices



Methods

- Cross-sectional study design
- Structured questionnaire
 - Multiple choice knowledge items
 - Attitudinal scale
 - Risk ratings
 - Reported frequency of practices
- 3 district hospitals
- Pre-HAART era

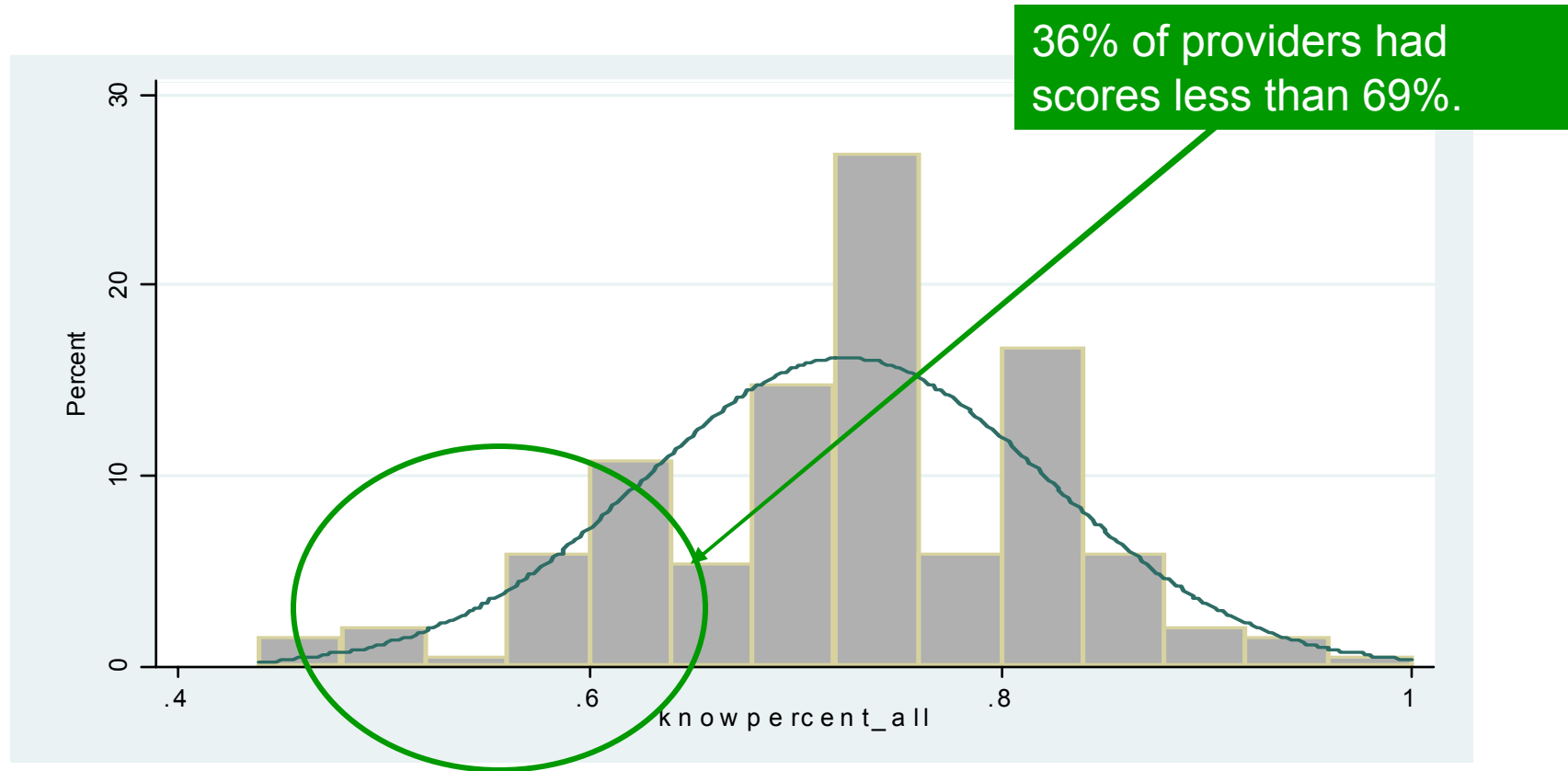


Provider Sample

Provider Characteristics	N = 204
Gender	
Male	31%
Female	69%
Provider Type	
Doctors	39%
Nurse / Midwife	37%
Medical Assistant	22%
Direct Patient Care	89%
Mean Age (yrs)	39.7
Mean years working in health care	16.4
Received HIV Training	51%



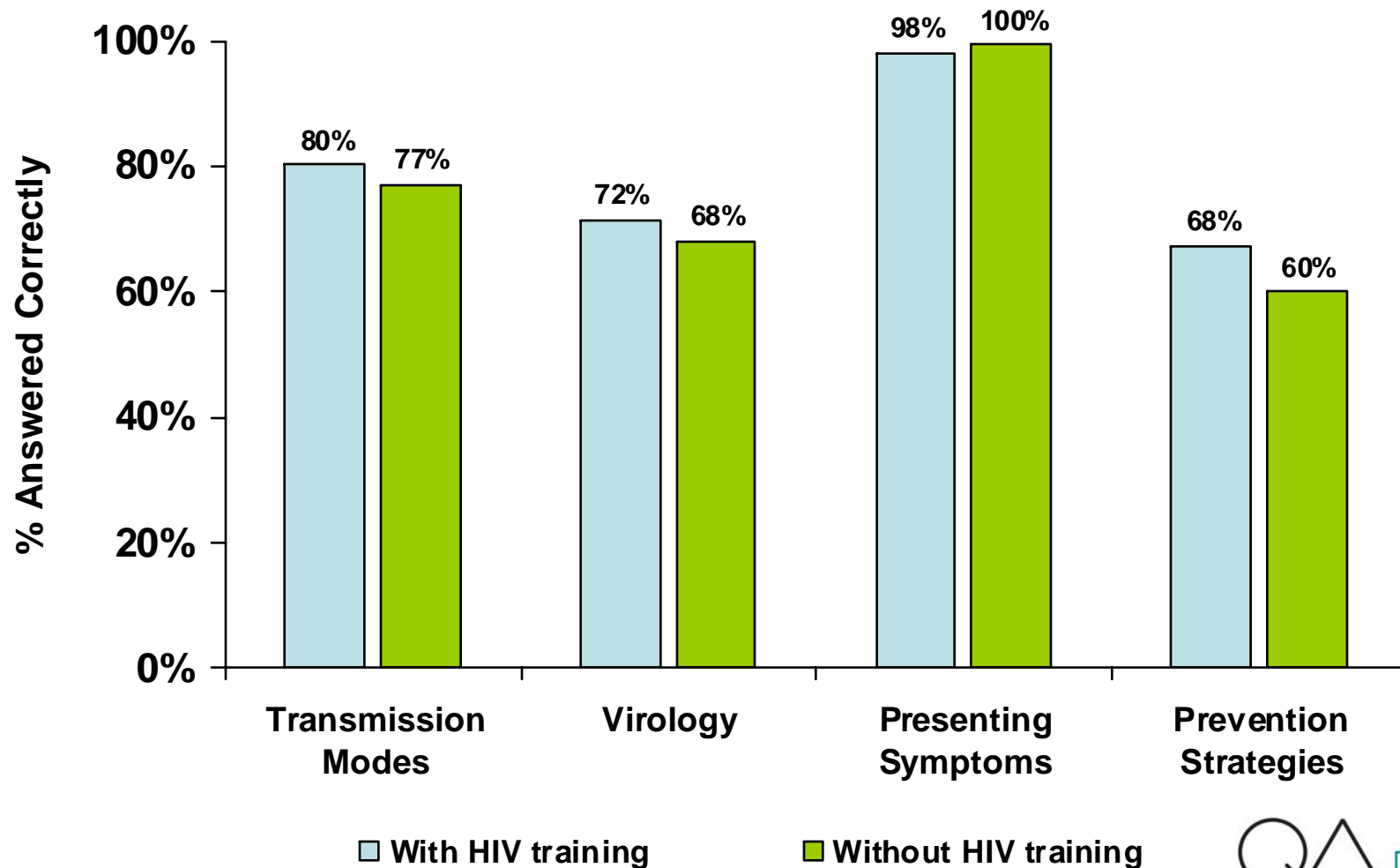
Provider Knowledge Score Overview



Mean % Answered Correctly = 72%
(Range 44 to 100%)



Provider Knowledge by *HIV Topic Areas*



HIV Knowledge Items: *Most Often Missed*

Selected Knowledge Items: N=204	% Correct
Transmission Modes: Blood and semen are the only bodily fluids that transmit HIV.	41%
HIV Virology: Persons infected w/ HIV will likely develop antibodies w/in 6 mos.	40%
Prevention Strategies: HIV transmission can be prevented by not recapping needles Equipment used for PLWHAs must be disinfected more rigorously	39% 33%



Attitudes toward PLWHAs

Overview

Most Common Beliefs

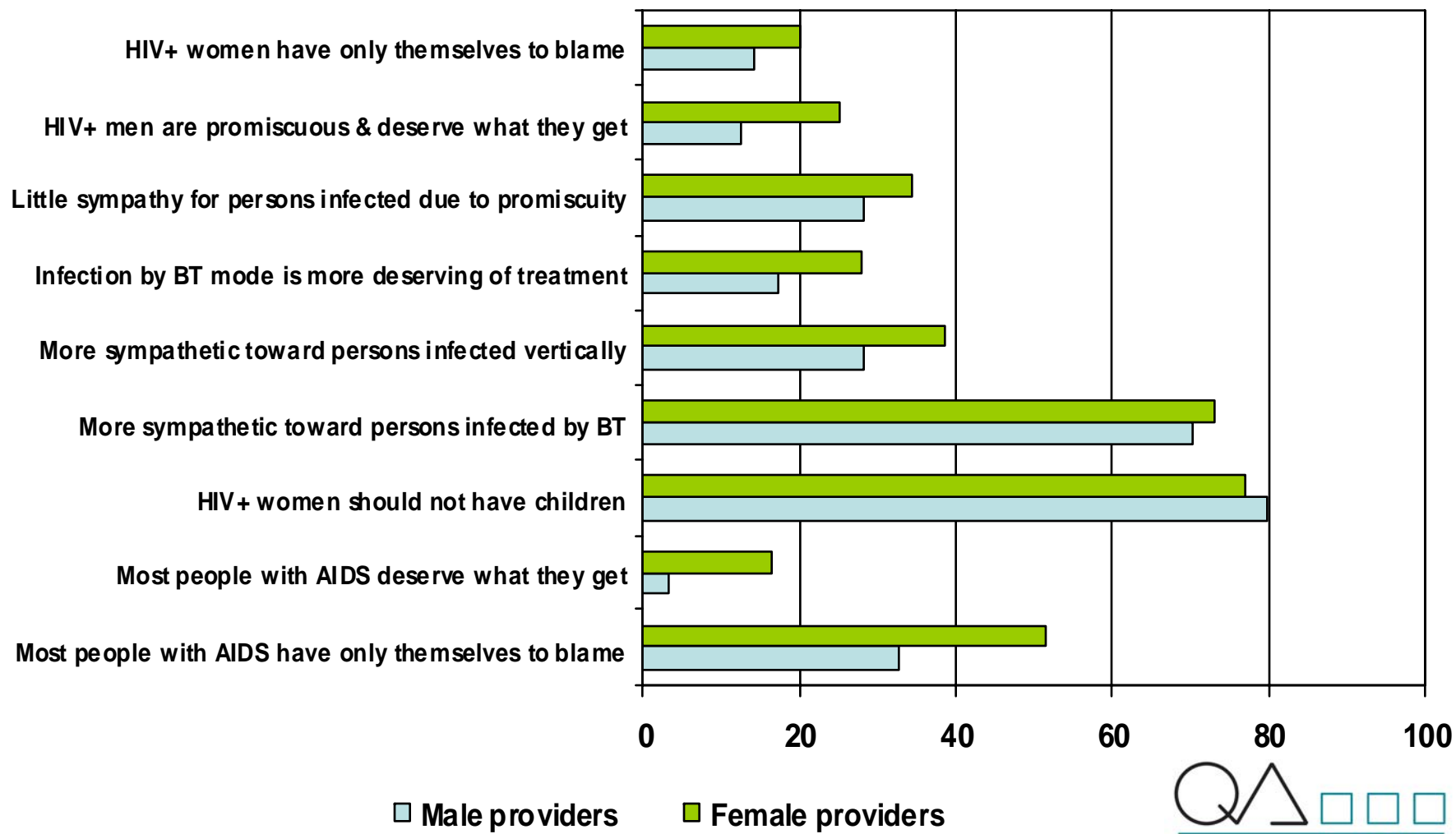
- Blame for Infection
- Differences in sympathy by perceived mode of infection
- Concerns of exposure to HIV

Less Common Beliefs

- Desire for separation

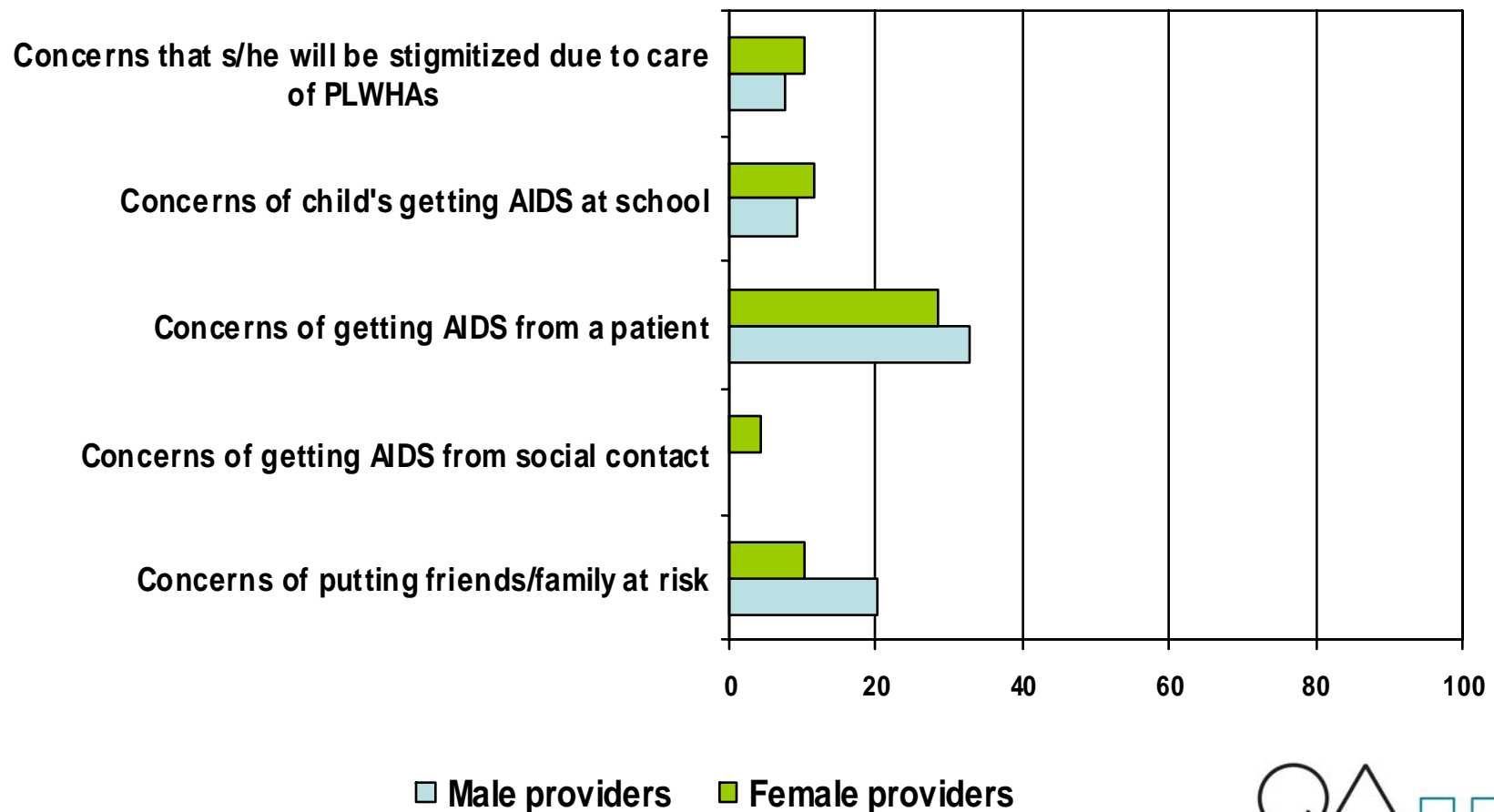


Attitudes toward PLWHAs: *Selected Items (% Agreed)*



Attitudes toward PLWHAs

Selected items (% Agreed)



Positive Attitudes toward PLWHAS

- Right to same quality of care
- Importance of working in caring manner
- Importance of respectful treatment
- Sympathetic toward suffering
- Willingness to provide care



Perceived Risk

Casual Contact

- **Perceived risk**
 - **72% assigned risk to at least 1 casual contact scenario**

Examples of Casual Contact with PLWHAs:

Shaking hands

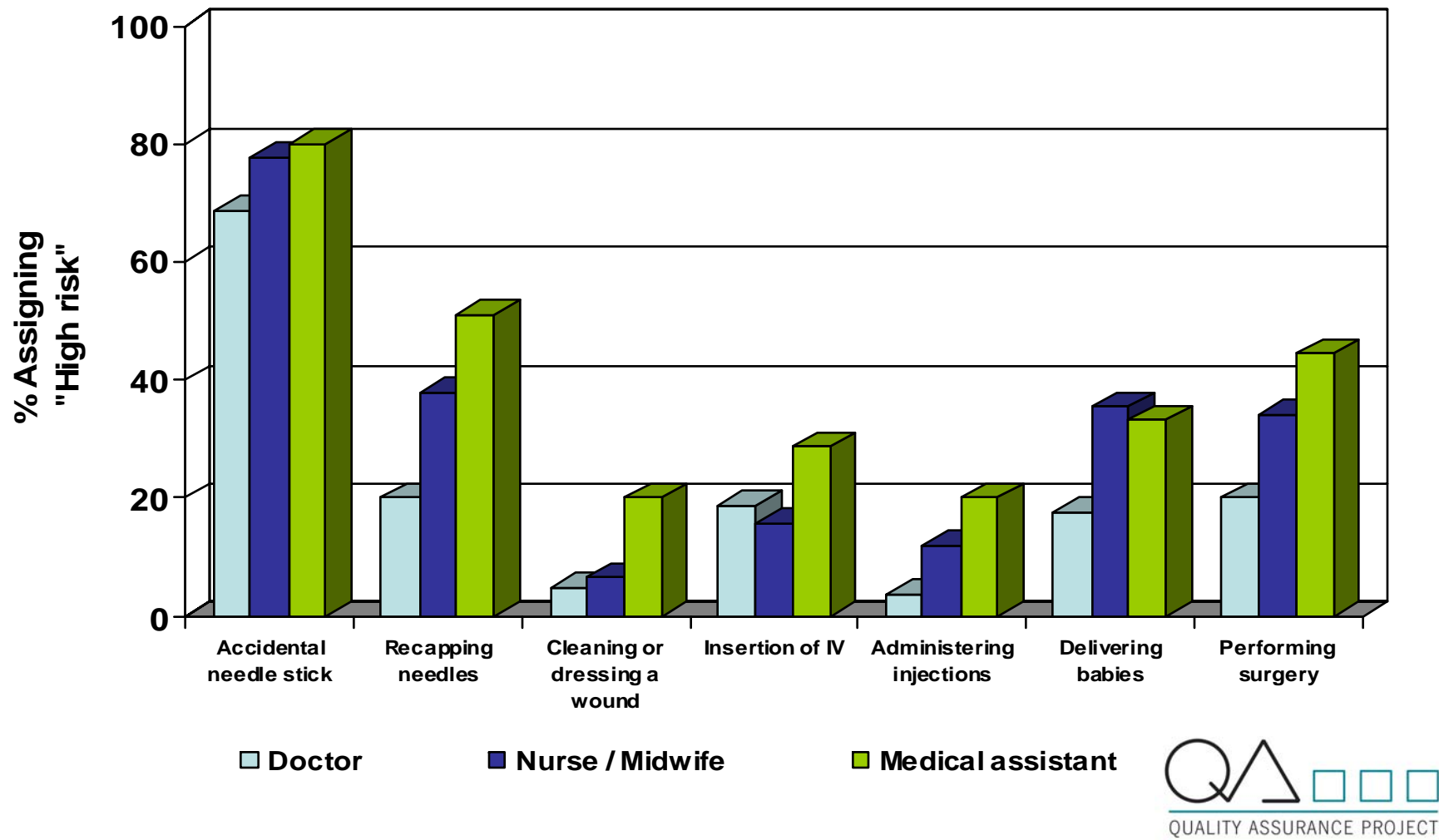
Sharing a drinking glass

Being sneezed on

Everyday work contact

Touching during patient assessment

Perceived Risk *Medical Procedures*



Discriminatory Practices Results

- Active denial of services 5%
- Passive denial of services 10%
- Sub-standard treatment 8%
- Selective use 35%*
- Financial discrimination 2%

Summary measure:

47% of providers reported at least one of these practices occurred at least some of the time.

* As measured by peer & self-report



Associated Factors:

Estimated parameters	Attitudes	Self Practice (Selective Use)
Multivariate regression coefficient	β	Odds Ratio
Explanatory Variables		
Knowledge of HIV	-0.54*	1.28
Perceived risk of infection	3.02*	1.36
Attitudes	NA	2.66*

* $p < 0.05$



Conclusion:

Summary of Findings

- Misconceptions of HIV transmission
- Positive and negative attitudes
- Concerns of occupational exposure
- *Potential* engagement in discrimination



Conclusion: *Study Limitations*

- Qualitative review
- Questionnaire Design
- Unmeasured factors
- Cross-sectional data



Conclusion: *Next Steps*

- Relationship of factors
- Mixed methods approach

- Continuous HIV/AIDS education
- Communicative forum
- Anti-discrimination policies



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- **Electronic report:** <http://www.qaproject.org/>
- **Additional questions/comments:**
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