



Syphilis Management Training

Topic Syphilis Literacy for Better Outcomes

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Overview



- ❑ Problem statement
- ❑ Why syphilis literacy is important?
- ❑ How syphilis literacy should be rolled out?
- ❑ Roles at ecological level

Problem statement



A study in the Free State revealed gaps in antenatal screening, repeat testing, and treatment of syphilis among pregnant women, highlighting weaknesses in provider training and program implementation (Khaliq et al. 2025).

Additionally, Thwala & Shangase 2025 revealed that only 44% of South African university students had basic knowledge of syphilis, while 16% had no awareness at all, an indication of literacy gaps among young adults

Why is Syphilis Literacy Important?



- ☐ To empower individuals with knowledge for prevention & early testing
- ☐ To supports HCW's with skills to strengthen timely diagnosis & treatment initiation and adherence
- ☐ To decrease misinformation and combat stigma
- ☐ To strengthens health systems through better case detection & reporting



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How should syphilis literacy be rolled out?



- ☐ Integrated into existing HIV/STI interventions (in facility and out of facility)
- ☐ Design and delivery targeted, sympathetic and non-judgmental messaging/counselling, tailored to age, gender, cultural context
- ☐ Use platforms like clinics, schools, workplaces, digital platforms, community gatherings to
- ☐ Prioritize capacity building for HCW's, peer educators, community champions and various sector members/NGOs
- ☐ Embed syphilis literacy indicators in national M&E frameworks



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Resources and approaches



Educational material

- ☐ Brochures, Leaflets, Posters & Infographics: Display in clinic waiting areas, community centres (e.g. local language)
- ☐ Digital Resources: Short videos, social media content (advocates/activists), SMS campaigns
- ☐ School & Youth Programs: Age-appropriate sexual health education modules

Community Engagement

- ☐ CBOs/FBOs and THPs: Promote testing and linkage
- ☐ Events & Health Fairs: Testing drives combined with educational talks

Roles at Ecological Levels



Individual	Interpersonal	Community	Organizational	Policy
Get tested, seek treatment, practice safe behaviors	Partners encourage each other to test & treat (index testing)	Community leaders, faith-based/Traditional leaders, NGOs promote awareness	Clinics (HCWs), schools (teachers and peer educators), workplaces(EAPs) to integrate syphilis education & testing	Position syphilis literacy as a national health priority to amplify literacy campaigns
	Families support adherence and reduce stigma	Normalize testing (POC/Home test) and reduce discrimination		Mobilize political will for investment in education & awareness

In closing



- ❑ When knowledge meets policy and action, we can break the chain of transmissions
- ❑ Syphilis ends where literacy begins!



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