

**A PARTICIPATORY PROBLEM SOLVING  
APPROACH TO INCREASE WILLINGNESS AMONG DOCTORS  
AND NURSES TO MANAGE HIV/AIDS PATIENTS AT THE  
NATIONAL REFERRAL HOSPITAL  
THIMPHU, BHUTAN**

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for the Degree of Master of Public Health  
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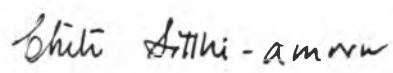
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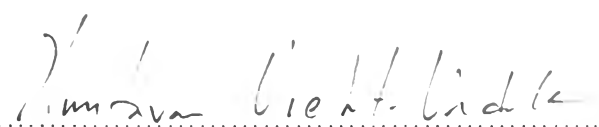
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## **ABSTRACT**

The study is focusing on AIDS related stigma among the practicing doctors and nurses at the National Referral Hospital (NRH) in Thimphu, Bhutan. The hospital is 200 bedded with 35 doctors, 110 nurses and 200 other faculty support staff. This hospital is the apex centre for medical services in the country and in addition serves as the Regional Referral Hospital for the Western Region and as District Hospital for the Thimphu District.

The main purpose for undertaking this study is, through a participatory approach, to develop a strategic plan of action to address unwillingness among the doctors and nurses of the NRH, Thimphu to manage patients perceived to have HIV/AIDS.

The concept of AIDS related stigma has been explored through a literature review and focused on stigma within health care. In addition, a rapid appraisal on the perceptions of health professionals in the NRH at Thimphu offered additional insight on the local situation. Quantitative and qualitative approaches have been applied to define the nature and magnitude including causal factors of AIDS related stigma aspects at the NRH.

A Participatory Action Research is proposed to address the fear in caring for HIV/AIDS patients at the NRH in Thimphu.

The project aims to increase the willingness among the doctors and nurses in the management of HIV/AIDS patients at NRH, Thimphu.

The objectives are to define the magnitude of unwillingness, to develop a plan of action to increase willingness, to implement and monitor the plan of action and to

evaluate the process of PAR and the effectiveness of the action plan among the doctors and nurses to manage HIV/AIDS patients at NRH, Thimphu.

And the strategy is a participatory problem solving approach through formation of a core team of doctors (5), nurses (5), and a representative each from the relevant stakeholders comprising a total of 14 members, based in NRH, Thimphu. The core team shall define the magnitude of willingness, develop a plan of action, implement, monitor and evaluate the process and effectiveness of plan of action over 24 months of the PAR study period. The budget estimate for the preparatory phase including uptill the planning phase only, is USD 14,000/- (Fourteen Thousand US Dollars).

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