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Emerging Social Issues Division

Social Policy and Population Section

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Article **Older Persons' AIDS Knowledge and Willingness to Provide Care in an Impoverished Nation: Evidence from Cambodia**

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Abstract In developing countries, older persons are often called upon to be primary caregivers for their children who contract HIV. Consequently, their understanding of the disease and willingness to provide care is critical for AIDS sufferers. This issue is examined among men and women aged 60 or over in Cambodia, a country with pervasive poverty. Results indicate that older women are less knowledgeable about AIDS than women in their reproductive years but more likely to state a willingness to provide care. Notably, there is a strong relationship between knowledge and willingness. Moreover, although poverty and low education contribute to poor AIDS knowledge, the association is mediated by mass media exposure. Hence, the authors conclude that facilitating ownership of radios and televisions in poverty-stricken households may be effective for promoting AIDS understanding and willingness to provide care. This has implications both within Cambodia and globally, especially given the current emphasis on information, education and communication (IEC) campaigns to help combat the epidemic.

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