

More HIV Services, More Costs in South Africa

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HIV testing and services are more prevalent than ever in South Africa, but the country's government may not be able to sustain funding the effort, PlusNews reports. In accordance with World Health Organization guidelines, South Africa is now administering antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) to people with HIV once their CD4 counts drop below 350. Half of all babies born to HIV-positive mothers are being tested for HIV—up from one in four in 2009—as are almost all pregnant women, reducing mother-to-child transmission to less than 4 percent. Testing of HIV-positive people for tuberculosis—the leading cause of death among people with HIV—has also climbed, from 30 percent four years ago to 70 percent today. However, the number of South Africans on ARVs is rising from 1.5 million in 2011 to an estimated 3 million in 2015. With only 20 percent of the country's HIV/AIDS funding coming from outside donors, South Africa is expected to suffer a serious shortfall in its HIV/AIDS funding in the near future.

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