

Developing countries need to build HIV research pool: NIH

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Singapore: National Institutes of Health (NIH) recommends that scientists and physicians in low and middle income countries should build on existing HIV research to study and treat chronic conditions.

Patients once condemned to death by AIDS suffer from noncommunicable diseases such as cancer, heart and lung disease, kidney disease, diabetes, mental illness and gastrointestinal disorders. These conditions can be related to the infection itself, the drugs used to treat it, or the simple process of aging, suggests NIH.

Increasing rates of chronic diseases among persons with HIV, if unaddressed may set back or even reverse the impressive health gains achieved over the last decade. Additionally, clinics in many rural areas of Africa, Asia and Latin America are increasingly under strain as they attempt to provide services beyond acute care to treat long-term HIV. To address these issues, global health experts recommend increasing research capacity with respect to HIV-noncommunicable disease burdens in developing countries.

"Just as the advent of widespread antiretroviral treatment demanded a seismic shift in global human capacity and health systems for the emergency response to HIV, emerging chronic conditions among those with HIV in lower- and middle-income countries will demand no less," said K M Venkat Narayan, Emory University, Atlanta, lead authors of report.