

Incidence data do not count everyone

We welcome Risher and colleagues¹ Article on the age patterns of HIV incidence using cohorts from southern and eastern Africa. We note that the upper age limit of the data presented is 54 years, with an upper age limit of 49 years for some cohorts. According to the authors, this is because of “limited serosurveillance in those younger than 15 years and older than 54 years”. However, the main finding of the paper is that incidence has shifted to older ages.

Although we acknowledge that the incidence rates among older adults aged 50 years and older are likely to be small, this paper, which uses data from some of the best and most prominent cohorts in the region, perpetuates a blind spot in the response to the HIV epidemic not only in Africa but also globally.

Over the past decade, there have been several articles about the ageing of the HIV epidemic population in Africa, highlighting ongoing sexual behaviour among this population, caregiving responsibilities, and a neglect in policy responses.^{2,3}

Wong and colleagues⁴ show the feasibility of reporting on health indicators among populations older than 54 years with South African data, reporting on HIV among populations aged 80 years and older.

We call on our colleagues to take active steps to overcome the low serosurveillance among older populations and to address what Setel and colleagues⁵ called the scandal of invisibility in a call to make everyone count by counting everyone.

We declare no competing interests.

*Joel Negin, Janet Seeley joel.negin@sydney.edu.au

The University of Sydney School of Public Health, Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia (JN); London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, London, UK (JS); The Medical Research Council/Uganda Virus Research Institute and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine Uganda Research Unit, Entebbe, Uganda (JS)

- 1 Risher KA, Cori A, Reniers G, et al. Age patterns of HIV incidence in eastern and southern Africa: a modelling analysis of observational population-based cohort studies. *Lancet HIV* 2021; **8**: e429–39.
- 2 Negin J, Geddes L, Brennan-Ing M, Kuteesa M, Karpiak S, Seeley J. Sexual behavior of older adults living with HIV in Uganda. *Arch Sex Behav* 2016; **45**: 441–49.
- 3 Schatz E, Seeley J. Gender, ageing and carework in east and southern Africa: a review. *Glob Public Health* 2015; **10**: 1185–200.
- 4 Wong EB, Olivier S, Gunda R, et al. Convergence of infectious and non-communicable disease epidemics in rural South Africa: a cross-sectional, population-based multimorbidity study. *Lancet Glob Health* 2021; **9**: e967–76.
- 5 Setel PW, Macfarlane SB, Szreter S, et al. A scandal of invisibility: making everyone count by counting everyone. *Lancet* 2007; **370**: 1569–77.