It is a grim reality not a myth that AIDS, being one of the most devastating, frightening and stigmatizing health crisis of modern times, is posing a great threat to the whole world. India stands first as declared in the 11th International AIDS Conference held at Vancouver, Canada on 12th July 1996. By the end of 1995, a total of 1.3 million cumulative AIDS cases had been reported from 193 countries to the WHO. The economic and demographic consequences of the spread of HIV/AIDS are inexcusable and awesome. In the developing countries, the additional burden of AIDS on already strained health resources will be enormous.

The challenge is to act speedily and effectively to limit the further spread of the epidemic. Hence, health personnel have the dual responsibility of providing health care and counselling to patients infected with HIV and are at risk of getting AIDS through their occupational exposure. Nurses, being on the frontline than any other health care professional for the AIDS/HIV patient care, are expected to have clear understanding regarding epidemiology of disease, of their own fears and concerns and measures for prevention of AIDS.

The objectives of the study were:

a. To assess and compare the knowledge score (KS) of nursing graduates (GNM & B.Sc. (N)) about HIV/AIDS
b. To assess and compare the attitude score (AS) of nursing graduates (GNM & B.Sc. (N)) about HIV/AIDS
c. To assess and compare universal precautions practices score (UPPS) of nursing graduates (GNM & B.Sc. (N)).
d. To establish relationship between graduates' KS, AS and UPPS.
e. To find out the relationship of KS, AS and UPPS with following variables i.e., professional experience, in-service education about HIV/AIDS and professional exposure to HIV/AIDS patients.

**Material and Methods:**

The study was conducted in a selected hospital of Ludhiana (Punjab). The conceptual framework used for the study was based on the 'Three phase theory of task performance' (Fitts, 1965), which involves theory of attitude formation, nature of knowledge and practice theory. Education influences knowledge, which in turn develops positive attitudes and motivates staffs to follow UPPS. A descriptive comparative survey approach was used to determine knowledge, attitude and UPPS about HIV/AIDS among nursing graduates. Purposive random sampling technique was used for selection of sample. Total thirty nursing graduates participated in the study, working in critical care areas, where most of the UPPS could be observed. A structured knowledge questionnaire comprised 52 items, an attitude Likert scale consisting of 20 declarative statements was administered to determine knowledge and attitude. To assess universal precautions practices score (UPPS) a checklist was prepared for making non-participant observation, among nursing graduates (GNM and B.Sc. (N)). Knowledge and attitude questionnaire was administered after the clients were observed three in their respective clinical areas during different shifts of duty.

The data obtained were analysis in terms of both descriptive and inferential statistics by using mean, mean percentage, standard deviation, 't' test and coefficient of correlation. Bar diagrams, pie diagrams and scatter diagrams were prepared to depict the relevant data.

**Results and Discussion**

The main findings of the study were:

1. B.Sc. (N) graduates had significantly higher knowledge than GNM graduates (p<0.01). Both the groups had maximum score in the area of management followed by clinical manifestations and least score in the area of mode of transmission and diagnostic tests.
2. Both the group of Nurses had positive attitude towards HIV/AIDS.
3. In clinical areas both the group of Nurses had poor universal precaution practices.
4. There was no significant relationship found between knowledge score, attitude score and universal precaution practices score among both the groups.
5. Professional exposures to HIV/AIDS patients, duration of professional experience and in-service education on HIV/AIDS made no significant difference in the knowledge among both the group of nursing graduates.

The above findings indicate that inspite of good knowledge and positive attitude towards HIV/AIDS, the universal precautions practices are poor among Nurses. The cause of it may be multifactor like non-availability of protective wears, high workload, lack of defined policies on HIV/AIDS, negligence inadequate provision of autoclaved syringes, needles, gloves and instruments.

**Implications and Recommendations:**

For a developing country like India where there are only limited resources utmost importance is to be given to educational/in-service programmes for prevention of HIV transmission and universal precaution practices to be used to provide safe care to patients and protect themselves from the infection. Nursing curriculum should be updated and AIDS related topics can be integrated at different level along with other subjects, so that adequate knowledge is imparted to nursing students, the future staff Nurses. - Safer work practices should be taught and rein-

**KAP study on HIV/AIDS among Nursing Graduates**

**Sunita Singh**

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Announcing TNAI Workshop on
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From January 23-30, 2002
At TNAI Headquarters, L-17, Green Park, New Delhi – 110016

The Trained Nurses’ Association of India is organising a National Workshop on ‘Nursing Care Management of Neonate/New Born’ during January 23-30, 2002 at TNAI Headquarters, 17, Green Park, New Delhi – 110016. The overall purpose of this workshop is to review and update the recent advances in the art and understanding of prenatal and neonatal care by emphasizing on holistic care, to reduce neonatal morbidity and mortality in the hospital and community settings.

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- Registration fee is Rs. 1500 per participant
- Boarding and lodging, if desired, will be Rs. 300 per day per participant
- Local participants Rs. 70 per day, per person (lunch and tea twice)

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