



Identifying and treating depression among PLWHIV in the community settings of Ethiopia



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1. Issues

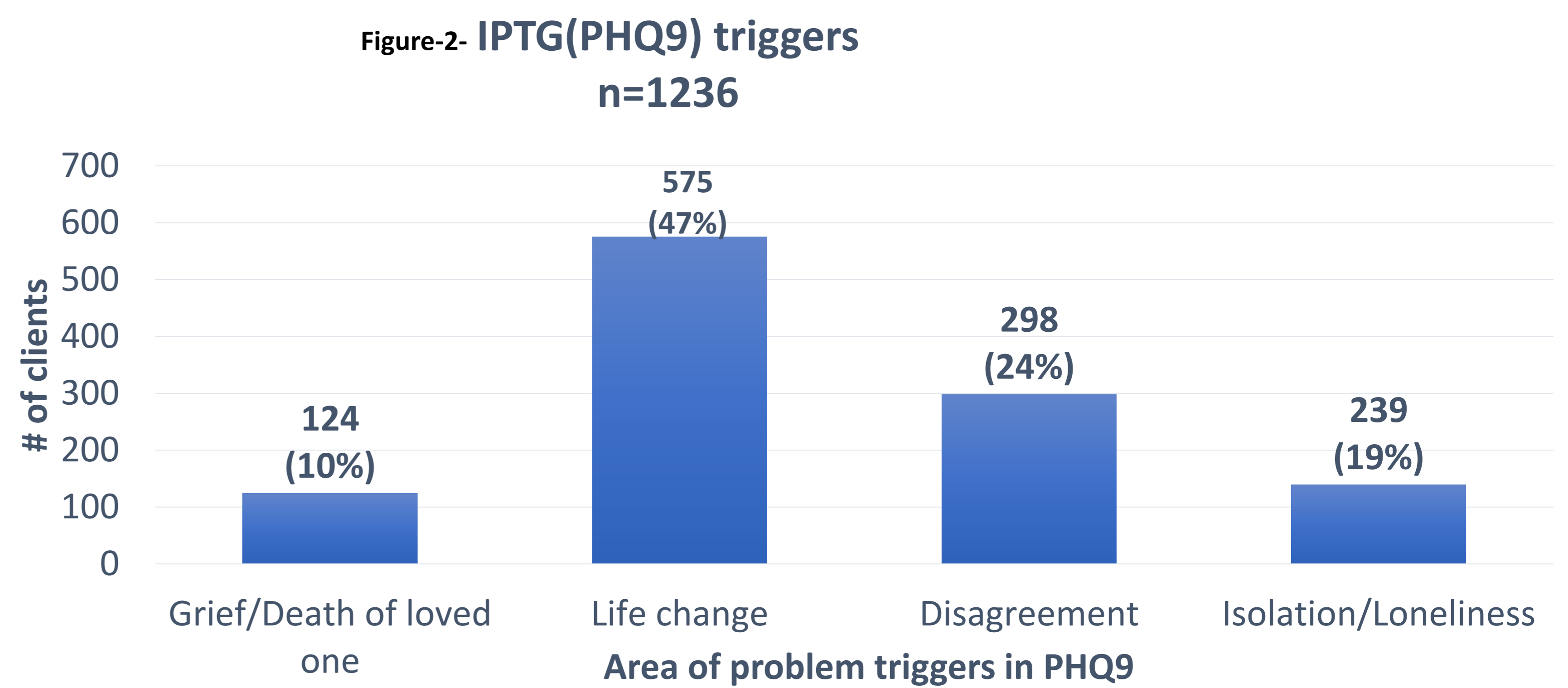
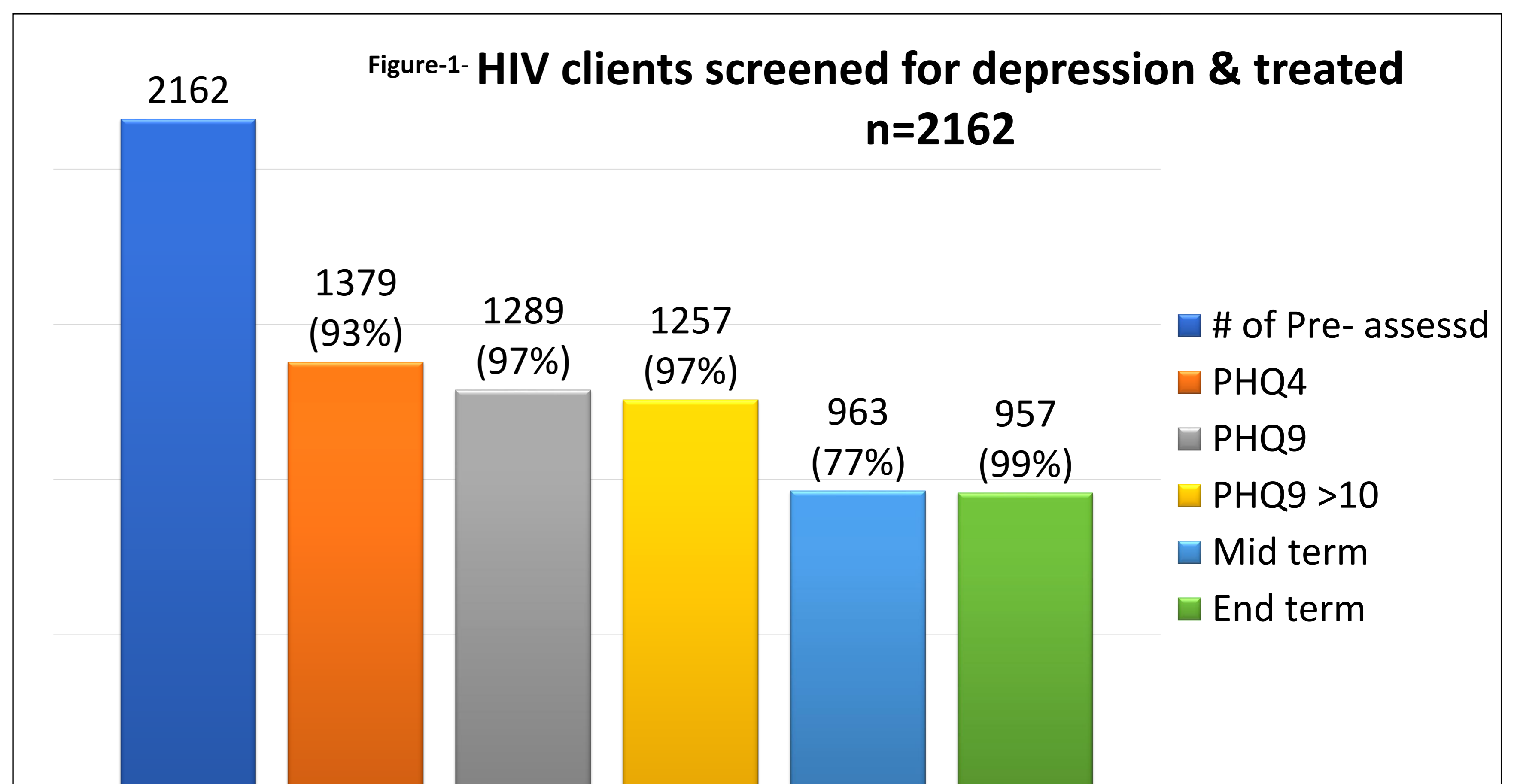
- People living with HIV often experience mental health disorders, such as depression, that are not properly identified, screened, or treated.
- We describe the identification, screening and treatment of depression in a community-based HIV prevention, care and treatment program in Ethiopia.

2. Program Description

- Community based data were collected from individuals who were enrolled to interpersonal group therapy session conducted in selected region, towns and service delivery points in Ethiopia.
- Community health workers (CHWs) were supervisors and community volunteers facilitated the sessions based on standard mental health guidelines which addressed client health questions (PHQ4 and PHQ9) weekly.
- Data were extracted from the community-based IPTG register for the period between March 01, 2023 - June 30, 2023. Descriptive analysis were conducted to identify and treat depression among PLWHIV who were enrolled to Inter-Personal Therapy Group (IPT-G).

3. Results

- Between March 2023 and June 2023, a total of 2,162 PLWHIV were screened for depression; majority 1,989 (92%) were females and the average age was 37 years.
- Nearly half 1051 (49%) of the clients were married, followed by divorced 624 (28%), widowed 272 (12%), and single 241 (11%).
- More than half 805 (55%) were unemployed, 450 (31%) were employed part time, and 202 (14%) were full time employees.
- Of the 2,162 PLWHIV, pre-assessment (PHQ4) was conducted in 1,379 (64%) clients, and pre-group assessment (PHQ9) was conducted in 1,289 (93%) clients of which 1,257(97%) had a PHQ9 score of >10.
- Of the 1,257 clients with a PHQ9 score of >10, 865 had moderate, 332 moderately severe and 60 severe depression.
- These clients were enrolled to group therapy of which 1,236 had identified triggers such as grief/death of loved one 124(10%), life change 575 (47%), disagreement 298 (24%), isolation /Loneliness/ 239 (19%).
- As of June 30, 2023, 963 (77%) clients were assessed with 89.5% reporting reduced severity of depression at 4th week of therapy while 97% of clients who reached 8th week/termination N= 957 reported to be free of depression.



4. Next step

- Community-based identification and treatment of depression through trained community health care workers and volunteers engaged in HIV service delivery can be effective and has a potential for scale up.
- Further analysis of data to understand the impact of this approach on antiretroviral treatment adherence and retention should be conducted.

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