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PaperTitle **The Microbiology Composition Associated with a South African HIV/AIDS Hospices**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### Rationale

The high prevalence of HIV epidemic in South Africa has led to the establishment of hospices. The basic elements of hospice care include pain and symptom management, provision of support to the bereaving family and promoting peaceful and dignified death. Some of these activities are attained through the internal monitoring of patients of whom provision of nutritious food is vital. Provision of basic food stuff thus also raise concern as people with HIV/AIDS have a compromised immune system are at increased risk of food poisoning and food borne illness. This might result from improper food handling, storage and preparation methods.

### Objectives

Thus the aim of the study was to determine the distribution of food borne pathogens in food preparation areas of HIV/AIDS hospices in South Africa.

### Methodology

Samples were collected from hospices within South Africa, and analyzed for total counts, presumptive Salmonella, Escherichia coli, and Staphylococcus aureus. The samples were taken from food handler's hands, working surfaces, as well as cutting boards.

### Results

The average total counts from food handlers' hands were more than 100 CFU with the presence of other typical pathogens. These counts where also present on other surfaces including cutting boards and working surfaces, of which could result in cross contamination. The distinct composition of the population in terms of pathogens was noteworthy.

### Conclusions

Implementing some measures and providing at least the minimum of facilities could decrease some of these counts. In addition use of appropriate detergents containing disinfectant, inorganic washable surfaces, gloves and plastic aprons could assist in improving the conditions. On the other hand the education of food handlers on aspects of food hygiene and personal hygiene has shown to be of value in number of situations.