

# A descriptive study of HIV-related death and its risk factors among HIV patients admitted to Sarawak General Hospital in 2022

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Despite significant progress in prevention, diagnosis and treatment, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection remains a major global public health issue. In 2020, Malaysia recorded an HIV mortality rate of 6 per 100,000 population. Data related to HIV death from Sarawak is scarce. This study was done to describe the risk factors and cause of death, among HIV-infected patients admitted to Sarawak General Hospital. **Methods:** Using a retrospective approach, data from January to December 2022 were collected. Relevant information collected includes the patient's age, gender, CD4 count, antiretroviral therapy (ART), haemoglobin (Hb) and albumin level, creatinine clearance and cause of death. **Results:** There were a total of 24 HIV-related deaths, of which 19 were analysed. The risk factors commonly associated with mortality were male gender (90%), age between 30 to 45 years (47%), CD4 <200 cells/ $\mu$ L (82%), Hb <10g/dL (74%), albumin <35 mmol/L (90%) and late diagnosis (63%). 5(42%) and 7 (58%) of patients with late diagnosis died prior to and despite commencement of ART respectively. Pneumocystis jirovecii pneumonia (PJP) infection was the most common cause of death. **Conclusion:** Late diagnosis was common, and the optimal benefit of ART was not achieved among HIV patients who died in our centre. More effort is needed to identify them early for HIV treatment to improve survival.