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NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

A STUDY TO ESTABLISH THE EXTENT OF USE AND ACCEPTABILITY
OF INDIGENOUS HERBAL MEDICINES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF
HIV/AIDS IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY OF MASHAMBANZOU CARE
TRUST IN HARARE

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ABSTRACT

The study assesses the use and acceptability of indigenous herbal medicines in the management of HIV/AIDS by patients at Mashambanzou Care Trust. The use of indigenous herbal medicines has gained popularity largely due to the escalating costs of pharmaceutical drugs. The objective of this study was to establish the extent of use and acceptability of indigenous herbal medicines in the management of HIV/AIDS by patients at Mashambanzou Care Trust. Mashambanzou is a non-profit making organisation that looks after HIV/AIDS patients free of charge. The use of indigenous herbal medicines in Zimbabwe has been shrouded in controversy and people do not publicly seek treatment from the indigenous knowledge systems because of the way they are perceived by many. The study used the qualitative approach and structured interviews were used to collect data. The study population included 52 patients and 6 Caregivers at Mashambanzou Care Trust. The purposive sampling method was used in the study. Data presentation was done using tables and graphs. The study established that despite the stigmatisation and controversy that shrouds their use and acceptability, indigenous herbal medicines were being used to a greater extent by patients and Caregivers at Mashambanzou Care Trust and were more affordable than ARVs. It is therefore recommended that Mashambanzou Care Trust embarks on a vigorous campaign on the use of indigenous herbal medicines in the management of HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe.