IMPLICATIONS OF HEALTH STIGMA, Mental Health and HIV/AIDS

About **1 IN 8** people living with HIV is being denied health services due to discrimination or stigma.

Individuals who are receiving care for a mental health condition are **4x as likely to be living with HIV** compared to the general population.

Compared to the general population, people living with HIV are diagnosed with **depression** at a rate of **2–5x higher** and are diagnosed with **generalized anxiety disorder** at a rate almost **8x higher**.

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**According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Medical Monitoring Project:**

- **4 IN 5** HIV patients report feeling internalized HIV-related stigma.
- **2 IN 3** say that it is difficult to tell others about their HIV infection.
- **1 IN 3** report feeling guilty or ashamed of their HIV status.
- **1 IN 4** say that being HIV-positive makes them feel dirty or worthless.

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According to the Center for HIV Law & Policy - HIV Criminalization in the United States:

- **19 states** require persons who are aware that they have HIV to disclose their status to sexual partners.
- **12 states** require disclosure to needle-sharing partners.
- **6 states** may require registration as a sex offender.
- **29 states** have HIV-specific criminal laws including laws targeting sex/non-disclosure, exposure to bodily fluids, needle-sharing, sex work, and blood/organ/semen donation.
- **24 states** have prosecuted plhiv under non-hiv-specific, general criminal laws (this number represents known prosecutions within the last 10 years).
- **7 states** have reformed or repealed one or more parts of their HIV-specific criminal laws.

The maximum sentence length for violating an HIV-specific statute is also a matter of state law. Some states have a maximum sentence length as high as up to **life in prison**, while others have maximum sentence lengths that are less than 10 years.

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