

ABSTRACT

Limited information is available on the association between depression and viral suppression among people living with HIV (PLH) in sub-Saharan Africa. We conducted a prospective cohort study of 3996 adults initiating antiretroviral therapy (ART) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Log-binomial models were used to assess the association between depression and the risk of an unsuppressed viral load (>400 copies/mL) after 6 months of ART. Women who had depression at both initiation and after 6 months of treatment had 1.94 times (95% CI 1.22, 3.09; $z = 2.78$, $p < 0.01$) the risk of an unsuppressed viral load after 6 months of treatment as compared to women who did not have depression at either time point. Men with the top tertile of depressive symptoms after 6 months of treatment had 1.58 times the risk of an unsuppressed viral load (95% CI 1.04, 2.38; $z = 2.15$, $p = 0.03$) as compared to the lowest tertile. Research should be pursued on interventions to prevent and address depression among adults initiating ART to potentially support achievement of viral suppression.