

Characterizing COVID-19 outcomes among PLHIV in India: findings from community-based national survey

Our community-based national survey (n=1,788) showed **substantial COVID-19 burden among PLHIV in India.**

PLHIV who missed taking ART for at least one week or longer in the past year **were more likely to test positive for COVID-19.**

HIV programs should integrate COVID-19 vaccines and **non-pharmaceutical, holistic support for ART adherence.**

Authors:

Rose Pollard¹, Manojkumar Pardeshi², Anurima Baidya³, Daxa Patel⁴, Naresh Yadaw⁴, Mona Balani⁴, Jade Bell¹, Allison McFall³, Sunil Solomon¹, Shruti Mehta³

1. The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, Maryland, USA
2. TAAL+ Integrated Health Center and Community Pharmacy, Pune, Maharashtra, India
3. The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MD, United States
4. National Coalition of People Living with HIV in India, New Delhi, India

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Objective: Assess the COVID-19 burden and impact among the estimated 2.3 million PLHIV in India.

Methods:

- Online survey issued in Jan 2022 (self-administered or over phone in local languages).
- Community-based organizations facilitated recruitment.
- Eligible participants were living with HIV and ≥18 years.
- Questions related to COVID-19 symptoms, testing, and treatment history and COVID-19 risk behaviors.
- Multivariable logistic regression assessed factors associated with a positive COVID-19 diagnosis

Results:

- 1,788 respondents across 36 Indian states/union territories; median age was 34 years.
- About half (51%) reported experiencing COVID-19 symptoms in the past year.
- No observable differences between men and women
- Key correlates associated with a positive COVID-19 test were working in-person during lockdown, any household member testing positive for COVID-19, receiving ART care from the public sector, and reporting missing taking ART for at least one week or longer in the past year.

Conclusions:

- Substantial COVID-19 burden among PLHIV in India,
- It is critical that HIV programs integrate access to non-pharmaceutical interventions and COVID-19 vaccines to address this burden.

Figure 1: Gender identity of total respondents

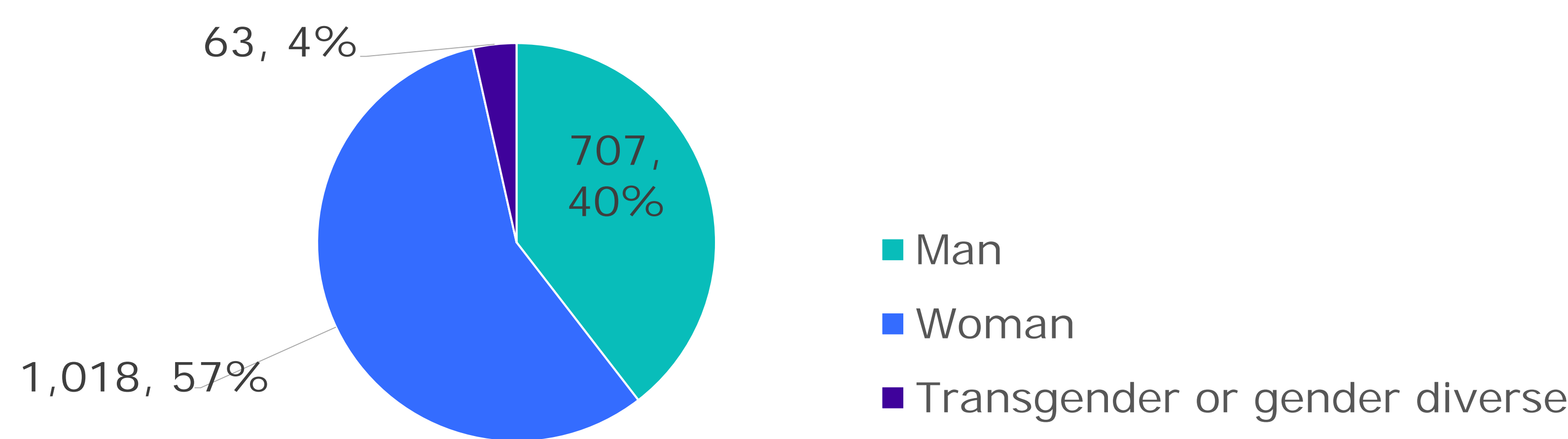


Figure 2: COVID-19 outcomes

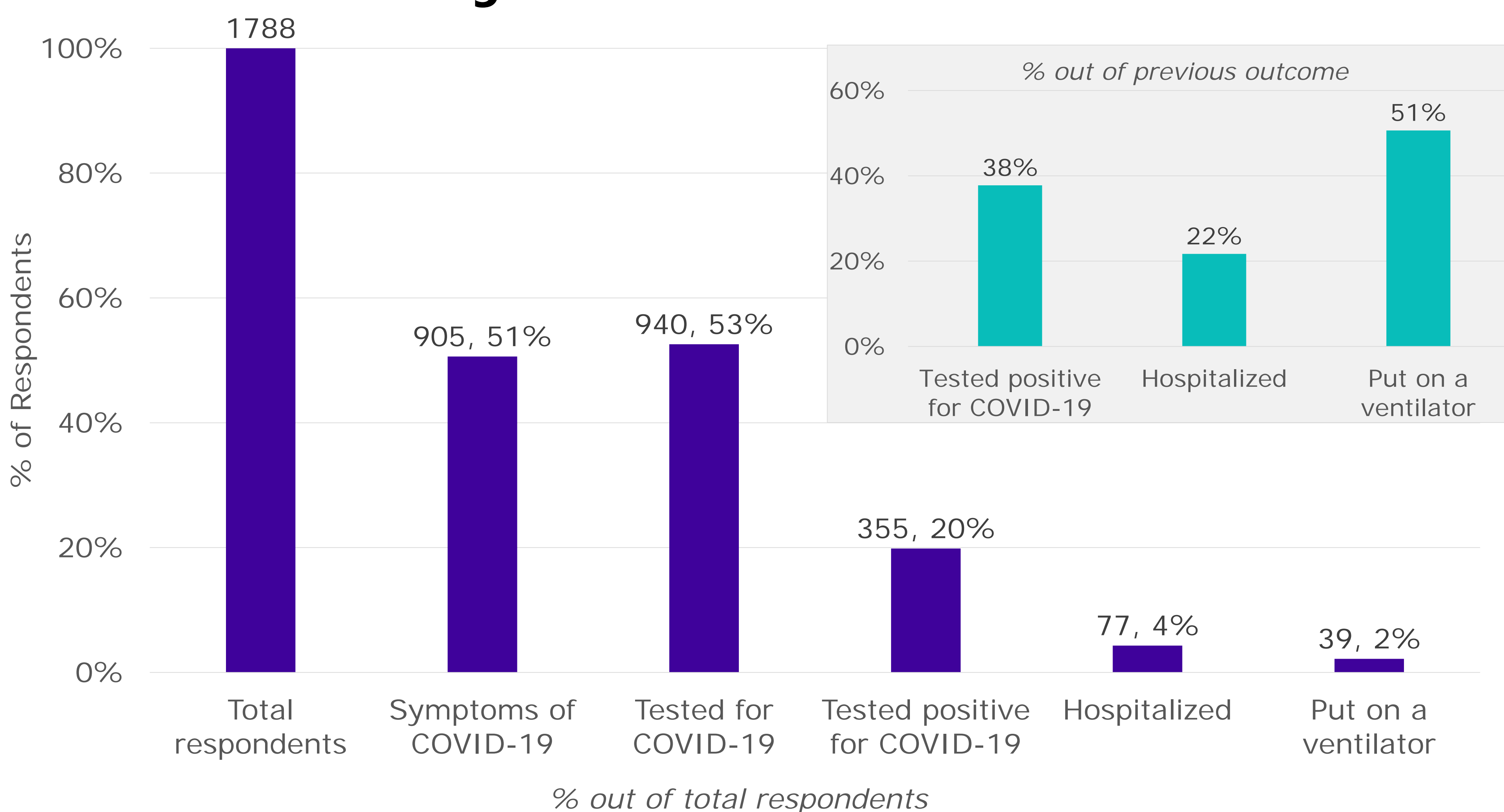


Figure 3: Factors associated with a positive COVID-19 test

