

Lendah Masoloke



“My issue with HIV in Zethlabile is STIGMA”

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LENAH MASOLOKE

Knowingly living with HIV since 2000 and on treatment since 2004.

From when I was little, I always dreamt of becoming a nurse; and when that opportunity availed itself in my community I jumped for it, with the little knowledge that I had about HIV. After many years of volunteering myself having cared for many in my community, I started getting sick, coughing and excessively losing weight. It is at this point that I tested for HIV. By this time, I had some knowledge about HIV so I went prepared. When the results came back HIV positive, it was easier for me to accept my status.

I have never had issues with disclosing my status, but the challenge in Lethlabile is that PEOPLE DISCLOSE FOR YOU BEFORE YOU DO IT YOURSELF; which in some instances amounts to stigma as it is not always done with good intentions. I still want to own my status and disclose it in a way that will help people not encourage them to point fingers and maybe stigmatise against me! Disclosing my status on my terms has really changed my life, it has boosted my confidence a lot.



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