

## Researchers Examine Antiretroviral Therapy and Mental Health Among People Living with HIV/AIDS in China

Researchers from the [Department of the Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior](#) and [South Carolina SmartState Center for Healthcare Quality](#) at the University of South Carolina's Arnold School of Public Health partnered with researchers at the Guangxi Center for Disease Control and Prevention to complete a study on antiretroviral therapy and mental health among people living with HIV/AIDS in China. They published their findings in [Psychology, Health, & Medi. ine.](#)

"Several methodological gaps exist regarding assessing the relationship between antiretroviral therapy and mental health," says [Wendi Da](#), a Ph.D. in Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior and a Junior Scholar with the Center for Healthcare Quality, who served as lead author on the paper.

The authors adopted an HIV care continuum to examine cross-sectional data from nearly 3,000 people living with HIV in Guangxi, China. They analyzed data on antiretroviral uptake from medical records and adherence based on self-reports. Depression, anxiety, and mental-health related quality of life were used as mental health indicators. Their analyses revealed that well-adherent antiretroviral therapy users had lower scores for anxiety and higher scores on mental health, but no difference was found for depression.

"As only antiretroviral therapy adherence was associated with better mental health among people living with HIV, to maximize the potential mental health benefits of antiretroviral therapy, intervention efforts need to emphasize on treatment adherence," says Dr. Da.