









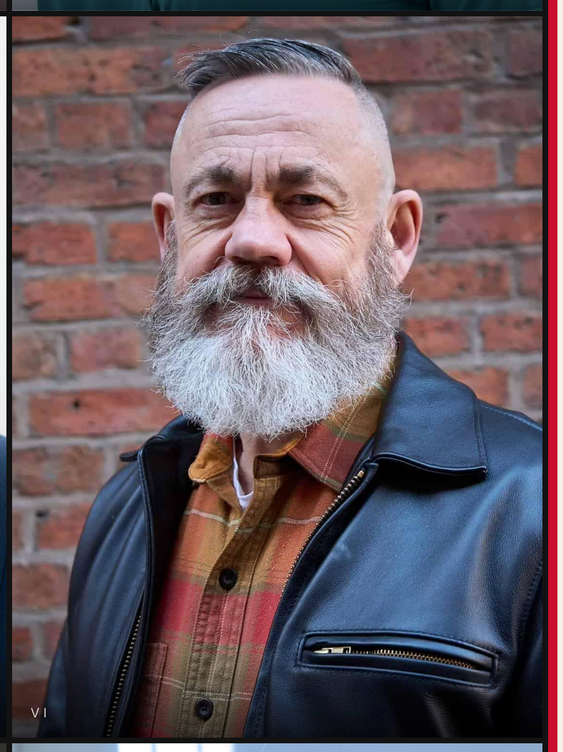

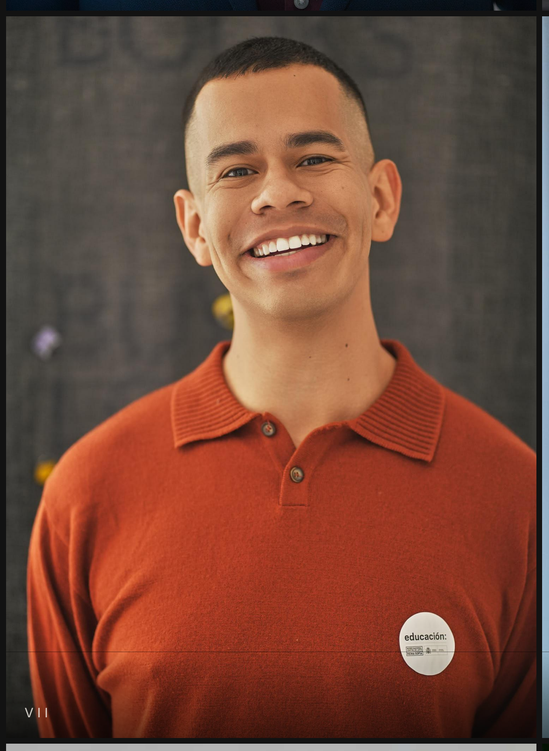



A PLHIV PORTRAITURE DOCUMENTARY

Seeing *Beyond* the Diagnosis

Portraiture and storytelling as a nurse-led response to HIV stigma — putting the person, not the virus, at the centre of the frame.

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> A diagnosis is a fact.
> It is *not* a face, a story, or a life.

01 BACKGROUND

Stigma is still the harder illness.

Treatment has transformed life with HIV, and **Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U)**. Yet stigma persists in communities, in media and, too often, in healthcare itself.

People Living with HIV (PLHIV) are still reduced to a status, and that silence can stand between people and testing, disclosure and care.

02 AIM

To humanise PLHIV through intimate portraiture and first-person storytelling, challenge misconceptions and open a public dialogue that dismantles stigma.

03 APPROACH · SINCE 2019

- **Portraiture** dignity, strength and vulnerability, composed with care.
- **Testimony** interviews in participants' own words.
- **A nurse's lens** trust, compassion and respect.
- **Public reach** — exhibitions and publications.

04 WHAT THE PORTRAITS REVEAL

- **Dignity** refusing to be defined by a diagnosis.
- **Resilience** lives rebuilt after stigma and loss.
- **Vulnerability** the courage to be seen.
- **Identity** whole people with rich, diverse lives.
- **Connection** images that invite empathy, not fear.

05 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- **Person-first care** see the patient before the status.
- **Art as intervention** stories reach where facts alone do not.
- **Stigma-free services** staff education built on lived experience.
- **Amplify PLHIV voices** in clinics, training and campaigns.

06 · CONCLUSION

When we truly *see* someone, stigma loses its hold.

Every face on this poster is a participant in the documentary and none is defined by a diagnosis. By placing their faces and voices at the centre, this ongoing documentary builds empathy, challenges perception and moves us toward a world where every person is celebrated for their identity and story.

U=U

Undetectable = Untransmittable

People living with HIV on effective treatment who maintain an undetectable viral load cannot pass HIV on to sexual partners. Sharing that message is part of seeing beyond the diagnosis.

PLHIV · HIV stigma · Portraiture · Nursing · Arts in health · U=U

Contact the project
plhivdocumentary.com
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