

COVENANT UNIVERSITY

CANAANLAND - OTA

OGUN STATE

POLICY DOCUMENT

ON

HIV/AIDS

COVENANT UNIVERSITY HIV/AIDS POLICY

CHAPTER 1

SECTION ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

Covenant University is a private, residential Mission University established by the World Mission Agency Inc. (WMA), a Christian missionary organization. The establishment of Covenant University is an expression of the vision of the liberation to give man a practical orientation for taking up responsibility, and thus the primary objective is the development of the Total Man through emphasizing his spiritual, intellectual and physical development. Spiritually, students are brought up to be close to God and to reach out to fellow students. Academically, they are challenged to become creative and to think independently and in innovative ways. The emphasis on physical development is channeled to maximizing man's potential by making available healthy life-style choices which improve the quality of life. The Total Man Concept (TMC) provides the fulcrum around which Covenant University develops. The vision of Covenant University is premised on raising a new generation of leaders.

2. The Mission

The mission of the University is thus to liberate mankind through the promotion of the relevance of university education to the society, by processing the raw brains of students into productive and resourceful entities; and by advancing the mental dignity of the human race particularly Africans, who have largely lost their mental bravery to colonial entanglements. Human development is the focus; and developing the total man thereby making him relevant to his world is the ultimate goal of Covenant University.

The University has as its main mission, the goal of training and equipping men and women to face the challenges of life. The Covenant University graduate shall be mentally resourceful, intellectually equipped, entrepreneurially self dependent, futuristically visionary and responsibility-sensitive to changes for leadership role.

SECTION TWO

1. Background

The HIV/AIDS situation in Nigeria and among youths

The HIV/AIDS pandemic poses a serious threat to all nations especially those of sub-Saharan Africa including Nigeria. According to UNAIDS recent estimation, almost 16,000 new infections occur every day in the world, 90% of which occur in Africa. Among these new cases, 50-60% is young people. More importantly is the threat of this deadly disease to the life of young persons in Nigeria. The prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria rose steadily from 1.8% in 1992 to 2.2% in 1994, 4.5 in 1996, 5.4% 1999, and 5.8% in 2001. The figure for 2003 and 2005 were 5.0% and 4.4% respectively. Recent findings show that youths are the most infected in Nigeria, with rates higher than 4.4% obtained in the general population. For example, 4.7% percent for those aged 20-24 years and 4.9% for those aged 25-29 years. This shows that youths are a vulnerable group. They also constitute the highest percentage of the populations in tertiary institutions including Covenant University.

2. Goal

The goal of this policy is to reduce the rate of HIV infection in the University community and to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS on the infected and affected faculty members, staff and students on campus and the immediate environment.

3. Objectives

This policy is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) Promote awareness and educate members of Covenant University Community on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections;
- (ii) Develop strategies and interventions that support behaviour change;
- (iii) Create a supportive work and learning environment for infected and affected faculty, staff and students; and
- (iv) Provide a workplace devoid of stigma and discrimination on the basis of real or perceived HIV status or vulnerability to HIV infection.

4. Targets

- a. To reduce HIV/AIDS vulnerability among faculty members, staff students and other members of the university community by 50 percent by 2010 and by 80 percent by 2015.
- b. To reduce the incident of HIV among Faculty member, staff and students of Covenant University by 20 percent by 2010 and 50 percent by 2015.

- c. To increase behavioural and adaptation in favour of HIV/AIDS prevention and control in Covenant University Community by 60 percent by 2010 and 90 percent by 2015.

CHAPTER 2

SECTION ONE

1. Scope

The policy applies to all faculty members, staff and students of Covenant University as well as other members of the university community.

2. Policy Components

a. Commitment of the University in the fight against HIV/AIDS (Leadership)

- (i) Covenant University recognizes the devastating impact of HIV and AIDS in the larger Nigerian society in general and in tertiary institutions, including Covenant University, and the need to coordinate all efforts at institutional level to mitigate the effect in the University's learning and working environment.
- (ii) As a University committed to raising the Total Man, Covenant University is poised to contributing to the campaign and fight against HIV/AIDS with the aim of promoting prevention and ensuring that there is care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA).
- (iii) Covenant University is committed to maintaining a healthy learning and working environment by protecting the spiritual, emotional, physical health and well being of all students in the learning environment and faculty and staff in the work place.
- (iv) Covenant University is committed to giving equal opportunity to all students, faculty members and staff irrespective of their HIV status.
- (v) Covenant University accepts and will abide by the provisions of International and National regulations and policy framework for Nigerian tertiary institutions on matters relating to HIV and AIDS.

SECTION TWO

- a. Law, Ethics and Rights of the University, Faculty members, staff and students:

In the absence of specific constitutional provisions regulating HIV/AIDS in the country, the law, ethics and rights guiding the University, faculty members, staff and students in respect of HIV/AIDS, shall be derived from the provision on fundamental human rights embedded in Chapter 4 of the Nigerian constitution, the University regulation and the work place policies inherent in the policy framework for Nigerian Universities and international conventions. Therefore, the underlisted laws, rights and ethics are available to the University, Faculty members, staff and students.

b. The University

The University reserves the right to:

- (i) Know the health status of all employees and students.
- (ii) **Conduct medical tests on students and staff of the University.**
- (iii) Enact rules and regulations that it deems appropriate for the general well being and health of the students, staff and the University community as a whole.
- (iv) Take actions that are in its judgment, necessary and appropriate to protect persons from exposure to infection if the University becomes aware of activity that poses a significant risk exposure.
- (v) Determine the employment of any employee as well as the admission and continued studentship of any student or staff if it can be established that the individual in question is unable to proceed with his/her official or academic duties.
- (vi) Indemnity against any liabilities that may arise in the university's dealings with students, staff and faculty members in implementing the University's policy on HIV/AID.
- (vii) Discipline staff and students for any violation of the institution's rules and regulation irrespective of his/her health status.

c. Faculty members and staff (Employees)

- (i) Faculty members and staff reserve the right to privacy and confidentiality in respect of their HIV and AIDS status and records.

- (ii) They reserve the right not to be subjected to mandatory testing of HIV without prior knowledge and consent from the said staff and faculty member.
- (iii) Information on the results of the HIV test conducted on employees at the University's Health centre shall be confidential and shall not be disseminated to a third person without the consent of the said staff involved.
- (i) The Faculty members and staff diagnosed with HIV/AIDS have a right to non discrimination and non stigmatization by the University other members of staff and students.
- (iv) The Faculty members and staff reserve the right to the employment contractual obligations and rights available to other employees.
- (ii) Employees of the University diagnosed and living with HIV/AIDS are entitled to medical care, support services and counseling.
- (vi) Support services are as enumerated under the care and support column.
- (vii) The continued employment of faculty members, promotion, as well as other benefits open to other staff members shall not be compromised by the HIV/AIDS status of the employee except as stated earlier, the employee can no longer work or participate in other activities due to ill health.
- (viii) No employee shall be denied financial benefits as a result of his status or penalised for resignation anomalies because of ill health resulting from HIV/AIDS.
- (ix) Employees have a right to have access to voluntary test and counselling whenever requested for.
- (x) Employees retain the right to protection from undue exposure to the risk of HIV/AIDS in the working environment.
- (xi) Medical examination /test for employees conducted shall not include HIV/AIDD test except expressly stated.
- (xii) Health workers as employees are especially entitled to occupational safety, health, welfare and relevant hazard allowance and indemnity

a. Students

- (i) Admission and graduation of eligible students shall not be determined by the conduct and result of a HIV/AIDS test.
- (ii) **Mandatory Medical test shall be conducted on all prospective students to Covenant University.**

- (iii) No student is to be discriminated against nor stigmatized as a result of his /her HIV/AIDS status.
- (iv) Results of test conducted on students shall be strictly confidential and must not be divulged to any third person apart from the guardian and/or parent when requested.
- (v) Students living with HIV/AIDS are eligible to every privilege and benefit accruing to other members of the student body especially accommodation, lectures, examinations, project supervision etc.
- (vi) Students are entitled to a risk free environment and reserve the right to raise objections to the conduct of any other person or group of persons that may constitute a hazard to the environment and the student.
- (vii) No student will be exempted from obeying the rules and regulations of the institution by reason of his/her status.
- (viii) Students reserve the right to have access to voluntary testing for HIV/AIDS and counseling.
- (ix) Students are entitled to have access to treatment, care and support

SECTION THREE

Counseling, Responsibilities and Support of University, Staff, and students.

a. University

- (i) The University shall provide enabling environment for all Staff and Students who desire testing and counseling related to HIV and AIDS.
- (ii) The University shall encourage the establishment of support groups for staff and students infected with or affected by HIV and AIDS.
- (iii) The University shall provide counselling against drug abuse, alcohol abuse, rape and sexual violence or harassment, or such concerns that can increase the risk of exposure to HIV infections and as spelt out in the students' hand book.
- (iv) The University shall ensure that appropriate environment for confidentiality of HIV/AIDS records and any other information on supportive care services are maintained.
- (v) The University will develop referral network to improve the health of staff and students infected with HIV and AIDS.

b. Health Care Workers

- (i) All health workers and care givers shall receive continuous training (through workshops, seminars, etc) on the modes of transmission and overall management of HIV and AIDS.
- (ii) Covenant University Health Center or Health Care Workers shall not refuse to provide treatment to HIV/AIDS patients.
- (iii) Covenant University Health Center shall provide health care workers with necessary equipment to ensure safety from blood-borne pathogens in the health care setting.
- (iv) Appropriate prophylaxis including free prophylactic ARV drugs and Voluntary Confidential Counseling and Testing (VCCT) shall be made available for health workers when they are accidentally exposed to HIV in the course of the discharge of their functions.

c. Staff and Students

Members of staff and students of Covenant University shall:

- (i) Know that everyone has an individual responsibility to protect herself/himself against HIV infection.

- (ii) Respect the rights, support and care for members of staff and students living with HIV and AIDS or those affected by HIV/AIDS.
- (iii) Conduct themselves in such a manner not to pose a threat of infection to any other person.
- (iv) Know that members of the University community have a responsibility not to discriminate against and stigmatized people living with HIV/AIDS, however, they will be encouraged to show love and care to them.
- (v) Know that unless medically justified, no student may use his or her HIV status as a reason for failing to perform work, complete assignments, attend lectures, field trips or write examinations.
- (vi) Know that unless medically proved, members of staff living with HIV/AIDS must carry out their responsibilities and operate under the same performance criteria as other members of staff.
- (vii) Be offered education and prevention programmes by resource persons as may be deemed fit by the University management and every effort will be made to ensure that all staff are adequately enlightened on the dangers of HIV/AIDS and appropriate preventive measures.

CHAPTER 3

SECTION ONE

INFORMATION, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNICATION

In order to effectively reach all the segments of the University, different information, educational and communication outlets shall be explored and established.

a. Information

- (i) The University shall promote the dissemination of information on HIV/AIDS by establishing specific centers (such as the College porters' lobby), where leaflets will be made available at all times for members of the University community.
- (ii) Appropriate billboards that will convey appropriate messages on HIV/AIDS shall be erected in strategic locations.
- (iii) The University portal system shall be maximally utilized to inform both staff and students on new developments in the area of research on HIV/AIDS.
- (iv) The University shall encourage the formation of Youth Clubs to promote positive activities that will increase students' knowledge of the disease and other awareness programme that will sensitize the university community on HIV/AIDS.

b. Education

- (i) The University shall assume responsibility for educating students, staff and faculty and other residents in the university community about HIV and AIDS.
- (ii) Efforts shall be made by the University to train faculty and staff and to continuously update their knowledge on relevant information concerning the nature and transmission of HIV/AIDS as well as care for infected and affected persons.
- (iii) A curriculum for the students shall be drawn, which will emphasize modes of transmission, symptoms and the various factors that are involved in the spread of HIV and AIDS.
- (iv) The curriculum will also include the effective ways of halting the spread and also ways of delivering quality care to the infected and affected persons.

- (v) The curriculum will constitute modules on the religious dimension of the disease and on counseling techniques in relation to HIV and AIDS issues.
- (vi) The curriculum will be flexible for lecturers to modify to suit different levels of educational training.

c. Media Communication

- (i) The University Corporate Affairs office shall be responsible for any official information concerning all matters that pertain to the University HIV/AIDS programme.
- (ii) The Corporate Affairs office shall identify and make available, University and hospital spokespersons, and if necessary, work with designated spokespersons to further develop media skills in relation to handling the press on health matters.
- (iii) Every response of the University to the media concerning AIDS matters should provide an opportunity to educate the media and the public about the disease and the efforts of the University to stem its spread.
- (iv) The University, through the corporate affairs office, may, from time to time, offer selected stories, news items, and press releases to the print and electronic media, which will highlight the University's mission as an authoritative source of AIDS education, research, and patient care.

SECTION TWO

a. Voluntary confidential counseling and testing

In a bid to prevent new infections by enabling individuals who are not HIV positive to avoid risky behaviour, Covenant University shall establish and support Voluntary Confidential Counseling and Testing (VCCT) centre.

- (i) Covenant University shall promote the adoption of acceptable and ethically correct programmes that will facilitate early diagnosis of HIV/AIDS.
- (ii) Covenant University shall adopt good laboratory screening facilities in line with the prescribed National protocol for HIV testing as provided by the Federal Ministry of Health.
- (iii) Covenant University shall use HIV screening and confirmatory reagents certified and licensed by NAFDAC in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Health and the National AIDS Control Agency (NACA).

(iii) Staff and students will be encouraged to submit themselves for testing, however, the status of every member of staff and students shall remain confidential.

(iv) The University management shall build the capacity of competent staff of the University Counseling Units to handle issues related to HIV/AIDS for staff and students.

(v) Members of staff and students living with HIV and AIDS have the responsibility of acting wisely, accepting counseling, keeping healthy and adhering to drug regimen.

CHAPTER 4

SECTION ONE

a. Strategies

(i). Capacity building

The university shall encourage the training and retraining of faculty members and staff.

For effective service delivery adequate space for the VCCT as well as appropriate equipment and consumables be provided by the University.

(ii). Advocacy

The stigmatization associated with HIV/AIDS and the usual fear in going for the HIV test necessitates adequate advocacy and sensitization through the use of different IEC materials and media.

(iii).Resource mobilization

The University shall create an annual budget for the HIV/AIDS programme. Apart from the annual budget, the University shall source for funding through local and international sources for the HIV/AIDS programme.

(iv).Research

The University shall provide funding and /or linkages in the research on HIV/AIDS.

(v)Rallies and Campaigns

The University shall encourage staff and student activities aimed at sensitizing host communities and the general public on the dangers associated with HIV/AIDS.

(vi).Seminars and Workshop

The University shall organize from time to time, workshops and seminars for faculty, staff and students for capacity building on HIV/AIDS issues.

(vii).Partnership and Collaboration

The University shall establish partnership with relevant agencies as well as collaborate with international organization and other Universities with similar visions in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

(viii). Work plan

For every academic session, the University shall set out appropriate work plan to achieve the set goals contained herein.

(ix). Monitoring and evaluation

For effective realization, monitoring and evaluation of the HIV/AIDS programme, The University shall constitute a policy implementation committee (PIC) to be headed by a Coordinator.

SECTION TWO

a. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

The University shall develop new and appropriate strategies for resource mobilization for HIV and AIDS prevention, care and support activities and integrate the funding of HIV and AIDS activities into the University Budget Resources for the management and sustainability of the programme. The primary areas of focus to be mobilized shall include:

- (i) Financial, logistical and technical
- (ii) Human labour (faculty, staff and students)
- (iii) Material resources
- (iv) Institutional framework.

b. STATUTORY AGENCY

- (i) The University shall initiate a statutory agency to mobilize adequate resources to address the various facets of the HIV pandemic.
- (ii) The agency shall be responsible for coordinating the timely and effective development, execution, monitoring and revision of the HIV/AIDS policy and other health related strategies for debilitating diseases such as sickle cell anaemia, hypertension, stroke, tuberculosis among others.
- (iii) The Covenant University statutory agency on HIV/AIDS shall ensure that the University Management and Board of Regents are advised on the timely manner regarding the level of financial, organizational and human

resource support required to undertake and complete different programme initiatives.

- (iv) The agency shall relate closely with the University Health Service Board to establish a link with an adequately equipped health centre such as a teaching hospital to act as a point of referral regarding complicated cases.
- (v) Each College shall develop an HIV/AIDS programme and be responsible for its implementation.
- (vi) The University management, the deans, the heads of departments and the Director of Financial Services may source for financial and technical assistance from international partners to compliment local resources.

The Colleges shall mobilize resources and participate fully in the prevention and control of the disease within the framework of the University health policy and in line with the National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS.

- (vii) The Colleges shall ensure that effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism are built into appropriate projects/programmes.
- (viii) The statutory agency of the HIV/AIDS policy shall monitor and report annually progress achieved in response to its objectives.
- (x) The statutory agency shall ensure that the funds generated internationally and locally reach the appropriate levels at which implementation of HIV/AIDS control activities occur according to set guidelines.
- (xi) The statutory agency shall share a fiduciary responsibility with implementing agencies in the interest of ensuring transparent and accurate reporting on the utilization of external generated financial and material resources.

SECTION THREE

a. Acronyms

- (i) AIDS- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
- (ii) HIV- Human Immunodeficiency Virus**
- (iii) IEC - Information, Education and Communication
- (iv) PIC- Policy Implementation Committee
- (v) PLWHA- People Living with HIV and AIDS
- (vi) STI –Sexually Transmitted Infection
- (vii) VCCT- Voluntary Confidential Counselling and Testing