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Stigma against HIV patients lingers

I AM HIV positive and was admitted to Universiti Hospital due to stomach pain.

I reached the hospital at around 5pm and was placed in the emergency ward for seven to eight hours, waiting for my blood to be taken and also for an X-ray to identify if I had a serious abdominal condition that might require surgery.

While I was waiting, I heard the nurses making remarks about my condition as a HIV patient.

The doctor only attended to me around 10pm. What upset me most was that when she came to examine me, she only asked about my history of as a

HIV patient. All her questions were not relevant to my condition at that moment. Her questions were: "How did you get HIV? Do you have multiple sex partners? Do you take drugs?"

Are these questions necessary to determine the cause of my abdominal pain?

Knowing that I have this disease has already affected my life, so being further discriminated against and judged is enough to tear me apart.

I have no idea how I got infected with HIV. I have never injected myself with drugs, neither have I had multiple sexual partners nor blood transfusions. I don't want

to think about how, when, and what because I have passed that stage and moved forward with my life.

I believe any discrimination towards HIV patients should not exist because we are as human as anyone else and we should be extra sensitive over this matter instead of being judgmental.

I believe as a country that has grown tremendously in many ways, stigma towards HIV should be minimised due to numerous awareness programmes that our Government has implemented.

**HIV PATIENT,
Petaling Jaya.**