

# Media alert: Ritshidze survey of 13,832 people using drugs, sex workers, & LGBTQIA+ community members exposes crisis in the public health system

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Ritshidze Community Meeting — Mamelodi, Pretoria  
29 February 2024, 10am

Sign up for live stream: <https://bit.ly/RitshidzeKeyPops2024>

On 29 February 2024, Ritshidze will launch a brand new report highlighting the poor quality of health services provided to people who use drugs, sex workers, and the LGBTQIA+ community in South Africa. This is the third annual state of healthcare report of its kind. Data from **interviews with 13,832 people** reveal the severity of the crisis.

The data will be presented to the health department and other duty bearers at a community meeting in Mamelodi. Queer and trans people, people who use drugs and sex workers will stand up and tell their own stories of what it is like to use a public clinic. We will expose the truth of the daily indignities, abuse, and humiliation that some people must go through, while simply trying to get health services.

## Key issues include:

- + **Facility staff are not always friendly:** Most members of key populations get services at public health facilities yet only 35% of trans people, only 33% of GBMSM, only 26% of sex workers, and as few as 17% of people who use drugs said staff were always friendly at the facility.
- + **Confidentiality violations are abundant at the facility:** Privacy violations are alarmingly common. 57% of GBMSM, 61% of trans people, 65% of sex workers, and 74% of people who use drugs did not think privacy was well respected.
- + **People often feel unsafe & uncomfortable in the facility:** The implications of poor treatment, abuse, and violations of confidentiality are that only 7% of GBMSM, 7% of trans people, 6% of sex workers, and 4% of people who use drugs felt very safe at the facility.
- + **Some facilities deny people ARVs or health services entirely:** 8% of GBMSM, 10% of trans people, 11% of sex workers, and 31% of people who use drugs had been denied services in the last year because of being a member of a key population.
- + **Lubricants are scarce at facilities:** While 92% of sites had external condoms available, only 75% had internal condoms available, and just 28% had lubricant available.
- + **PrEP & PEP need to be made more easily accessible:** Fewer people reported ever being offered PrEP at a facility compared to 2022 results: just 29% of GBMSM, 23% of trans people, 19% of sex workers, and 12% of people who use drugs.
- + **Life saving harm reduction services are entirely unavailable:** Only 9% of people who use drugs told us they could get information on where to get new needles, and only 10% were given information about where they could get methadone.

- + **Hormones are unavailable at facilities & care is not gender affirming:** Only 32% of trans and gender diverse people told us that facility staff were always respectful of their gender identity.
- + **Disrespect & questioning can push STI services out of reach:** Only 66% of GBMSM, 59% of sex workers, and 59% of trans people said they could access STI screening services.

**The embargoed State of Healthcare for Key Populations report is available upon request.**

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