

# Resilience among people with HIV: results from the UK Positive Voices 2022 survey

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## Background

- Resilience is the capacity to withstand or to recover from difficulties or stressors
- It is complex and multilevel, but higher levels and the resources associated with it (e.g. social support and financial stability) may protect against poor mental health in people with HIV
- We investigated:
  - the factors associated with high levels of resilience
  - the role that resilience plays in the occurrence of adverse mental health and wellbeing outcomes

## Methods

- Positive Voices 2022 (April 2022-March 2023) recruited people from 101 HIV Clinics in England, Wales and Scotland
- Participants self-completed a questionnaire on a wide range of topics
- Resilience was measured using the 14-item resilience scale (RS-14), a 7-point Likert scale
- Resilience scores are between 14-98; higher scores indicate higher resilience
- Factors associated with higher resilience (as the dependent factor/"outcome") were investigated
- In turn, the association of resilience (as the independent factor/"predictor") with a range of health and wellbeing outcomes was examined
- Multivariable models were conducted using modified Poisson regression, adjusted for a pre-selected set of core variables: age, demographic group and year of diagnosis

## Results

- 4135/4607 (89.8%) participants completed the resilience questions (Table 1)
- Median (range) resilience score was 80 (14-98).
- The numbers in each resilience category were:
  - low resilience ( $\leq 73$ ): 1556 (37.6%)
  - moderate resilience (74-81): 653 (15.8%)
  - high resilience ( $\geq 82$ ): 1926 (46.6%)
- High levels of resilience were more common in those of older age, heterosexual men and black African women (compared to GBMSM), those with greater social support, and lower levels of financial hardship (Figure 1).
- Adverse measures of health and wellbeing were relatively common:
  - Depressive symptoms: 20.4% (n=842)
  - Anxiety symptoms: 14.8% (n=613)
  - Recreational drug use: 24.5% (n=966)
  - Ashamed of one's HIV status: 49.6% (n=2052)
  - Alcohol dependency: 44.4% (n=1737)
- Higher resilience were associated with considerably lower prevalence of depressive symptoms, anxiety symptoms, recreational drug use, and being ashamed of one's HIV status
- However, there was no observed association with alcohol dependency (Figure 2).

## Tables and Figures

Table 1. Positive Voices 2022: Participant Characteristics

	Number (%)
Total	4135 (100.0%)
<b>Age (years)</b>	
Median (inter-quartile range)	53 (44-60)
<b>Demographic group</b>	
GBMSM	60.0% (2479)
Black African heterosexual men	5.8% (239)
Other ethnicity heterosexual men	8.3% (345)
Black African women	12.8% (530)
Other ethnicity women	10.6% (439)
Gender described as non-binary or in another way	2.4% (103)
<b>Year of HIV diagnosis</b>	
2019-2021	4.3% (176)
2014-2018	17.9% (724)
2009-2013	21.1% (856)
2004-2008	23.7% (961)
2003 or earlier	32.9% (1332)

	Number (%)
<b>"Do you have enough money to meet basic needs?"</b>	
Yes, always	54.9% (2210)
Most of the time	26.0% (1048)
Some of the time	12.5% (505)
No	6.5% (261)
<b>Religious beliefs</b>	
No religion	37.9% (1490)
Spiritual (no organised religion), important to me	3.6% (143)
Spiritual (no organised religion), not very important to me	5.5% (218)
Christian, important to me	32.0% (1259)
Christian, not very important to me	14.1% (553)
Other organised religion, important to me	4.8% (189)
Other organised religion, not very important to me	2.1% (83)
<b>Social support</b>	
High	54.1% (2235)
Low	45.9% (1900)

Figure 1. Proportion reporting high resilience (score  $\geq 82$  on RS-14 scale), according to socio-demographic factors

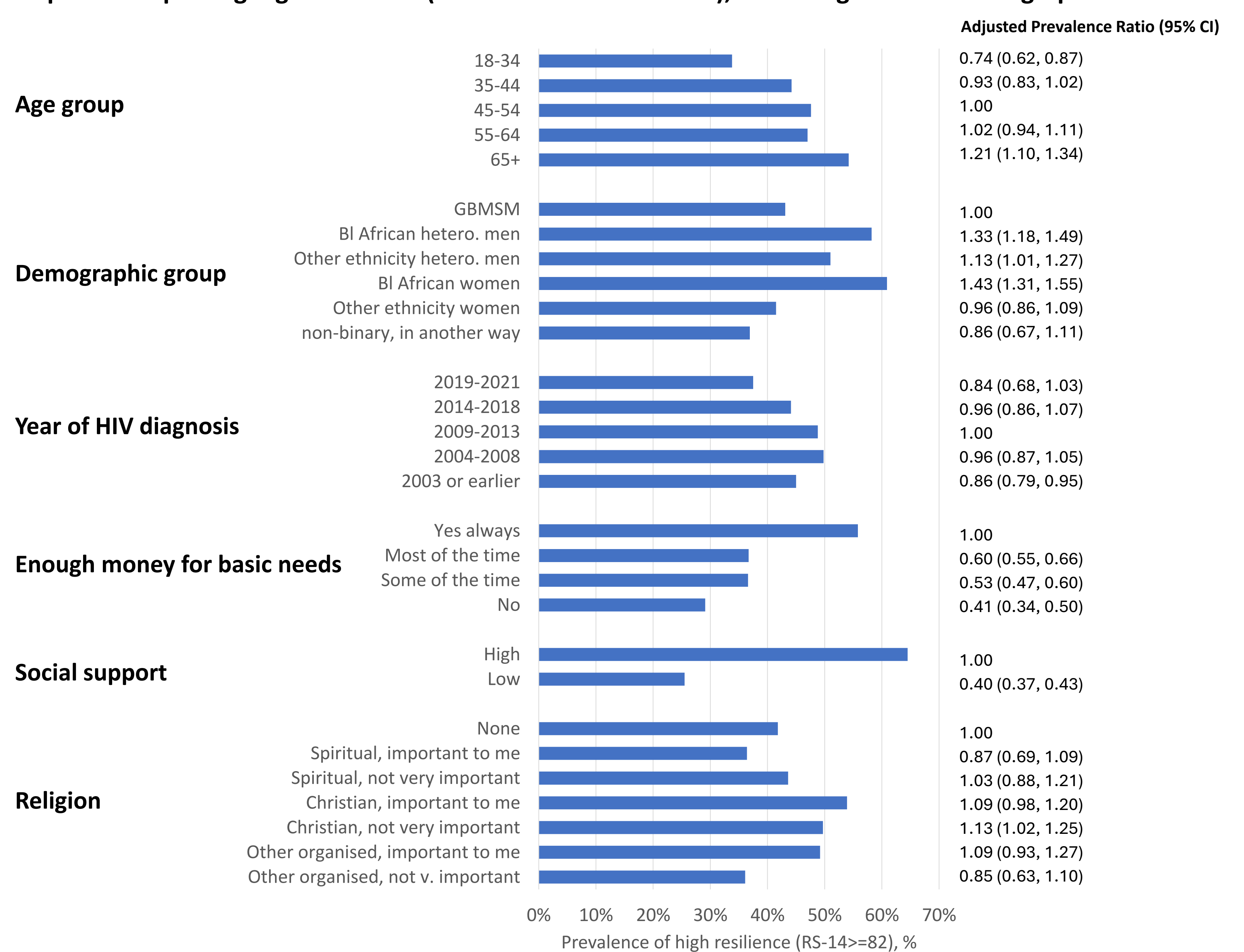
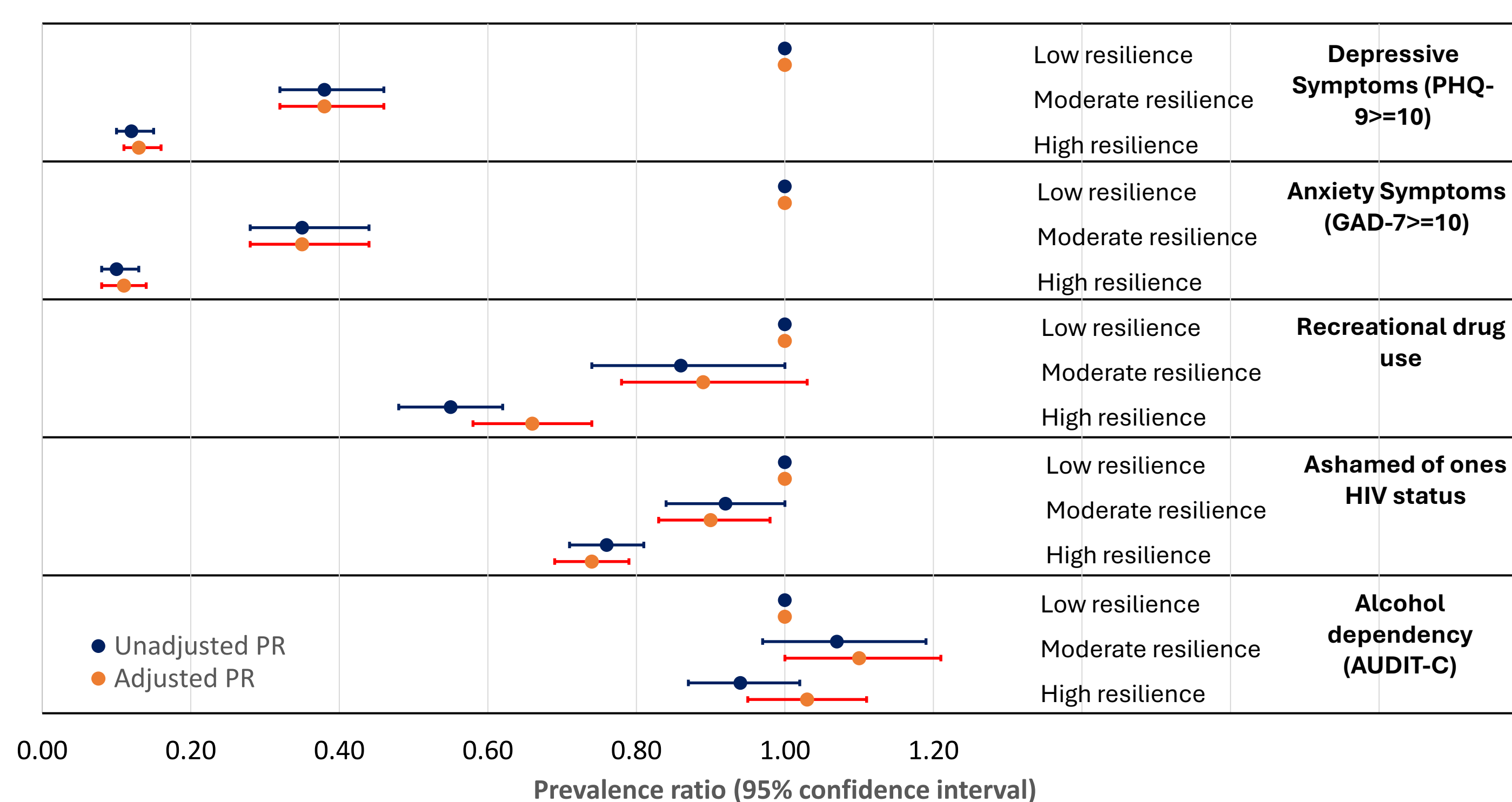


Figure 2. Association of resilience level with prevalence of health and wellbeing measures



## Conclusions and key findings

- Higher levels of resilience was more common in those of older age, heterosexual men and black African women (compared to GBMSM), greater social support, and lower levels of financial hardship
- Those with higher resilience had better mental health and wellbeing
- Evaluation and implementation of successful strategies that potentially help to improve resilience, such as a health and wellbeing coaching, could help improve physical and mental health and wellbeing outcomes for people with HIV

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