The theoretical framework for this work can be seen from the figures below:



**A**

## CATEGORIES OF CORE BELIEFS

| Disclosure | Fears |
| | Consequences of non-disclosure |
| | Perceptions and thoughts of others |

| Sexuality & sexual pleasure | Sexual pleasure and desire |
| | Disclosure in intimate relationships |

| Self perception | Self-abasement |
| | Hopelessness |
| | Restricted agency |

| Body, illness and death | Medication and medical care |
| | Illness/ Health/ Disease/ Death |
| | Fear of contagion |
| | Negative body image |
| | Normalising HIV |

**B**

## FUNCTIONS OF SELF STIGMA

- Maintains victim beliefs
- Provides protection
- Justifies non-disclosure

**C**

## COPING STRATEGIES

- Community involvement, professional development, and education
- Personal development, inner work, and positive attitude
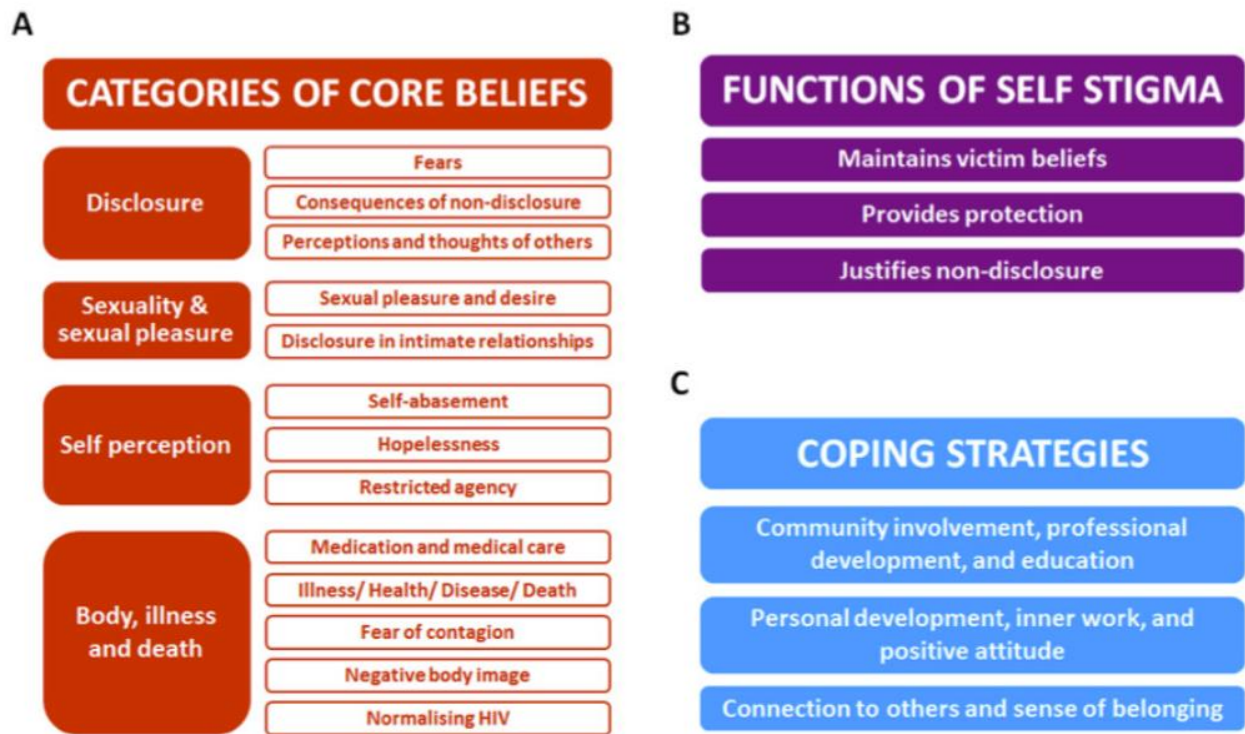- Connection to others and sense of belonging

Figure 1 Framework for qualitative analysis of interview data. Three main areas of analysis are shown: Categories of core beliefs (A, red), Functions of self-stigma (B, magenta) and Coping strategies (C, blue). Emergent themes were organised into categories (solid boxes), and subcategories where required (open boxes).

## SOCIAL FACTORS

- Economic, cultural and political landscapes
- Access to prevention, treatment & care services
- Community support networks
- Sources of information
- Levels of stigma and discrimination

*Self-stigma is the result of complex interactions between social, contextual and self factors*

## SELF FACTORS

- Belief or meaning systems
- Mood states (e.g. depression, anxiety)
- Coping skills and resilience
- Levels of knowledge
- Life experience and life skills
- Self esteem and self awareness
- Sexuality
- Disclosure of HIV status

## CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

- Circumstances and conditions of an individual's life
- Use of drugs or alcohol
- Childhood sexual abuse
- Power relationships
- Living conditions
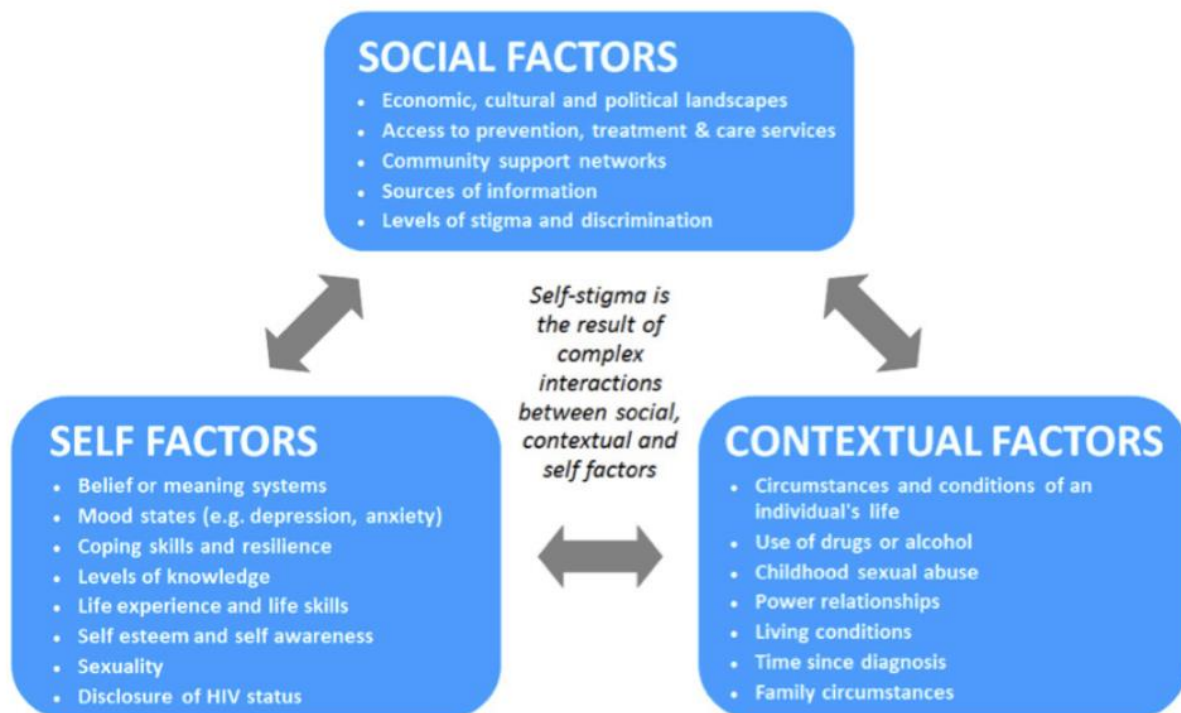- Time since diagnosis
- Family circumstances

Figure 2 Conceptual framework of self-stigma. Designed using concepts from Morrison (2006) [52], the framework comprises three interacting groups of factors (factors listed are non- exhaustive) which influence self-stigma: social factors, contextual factors and self factors. The complex interaction between these factors influences the development and perpetuation of self-stigma.