


Development, Implementation andAssessment of a Cervical Cancer Risk Assessment and Referral Tool in two Drop-In-Centers Serving Female Sex Workers in Kampala, Uganda



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Background

- Cervical cancer (CxCa) is the **most common cancer** among Ugandan women¹
- Regular screening** for HPV and CxCa allows for earlier detection and treatment, leading to **better health outcomes**²
- HPV screening services are limited** in low-resource settings, indicating a need for no-cost tools³
- Female sex workers (**FSWs**) are at **increased risk for CxCa** and face **unique barriers** that make regular screening difficult⁴

Aims

1

Pilot a new CxCa risk and referral tool at two drop-in centers (DICs) serving Ugandan FSWs

2

Determine eligibility for visual inspection with acetic acid (VIA), a CxCa screening method

3

Estimate CxCa risk among Ugandan FSWs attending DICs for health services

Methods

Creation

Questionnaire informed by Ugandan CxCa screening guidelines & published high risk behaviors for HPV

Prep

DIC staff training
Database creation

Usage

Administered June 2023 – May 2024 to FSWs attending DICs for health services

Follow-Up

DICs contact referral organization to determine screening completion & results

Results

CxCa SCREENING ELIGIBILITY

245 Completed Tools

224 Deemed Eligible

128 Referred For VIA

69 Screened with VIA

3 Pre/cancerous Lesions

91.42%

57.14%

53.9%

4.35%

CxCa RISK SCORE

Post-menopausal Bleeding5

Genital Warts14

Intermenstrual Bleeding38

Vaginal Bleeding During Sex46

3+ Pregnancies85

HIV +91

Tobacco Use116

Inconsistent Condom Use126

Abnormal Vaginal Discharge135

Sexual Debut < 16154

Pelvic pain162

Prior STI Diagnosis233

>1 Sexual Partners (last 6 mo)236

No HPV Vaccine / Unsure24

100% of the FSWs that completed the tool were classified as higher risk for CxCa

- 98.37% had unknown / negative HPV vaccination status
- 96.33% had > 1 sexual partner in the last 6 months
- 95.1% had previous STI diagnosis

Risk scores were, on average, higher for those HIV+

- Average for HIV+: 8.16 / 16 (SD=1.71)
- Average for HIV-: 6.16 / 15 (SD=2.26)

SYMPTOMS

94.69% of the FSWs experienced at least 1 symptom associated with CxCa

- Of those, 70.36% experienced dull backache, 62.07% experienced abdominal pain, and 28.02% experienced extreme fatigue
- Average number of symptoms was 1.89 (SD=1.09)

46

144

163

65

28

17

Difficult or Painful Bowel Movements or Urination

Abdominal Pain

Dull Backache

Extreme Fatigue

Leg Swelling

Bleeding from Rectum or Blood in Urine

DISCUSSION

- The risk and referral tool was effective in **guiding DIC staff's medical decision-making** regarding CxCa screening referrals
- Usage of the tool led to the identification of FSWs with CxCa and connected them with treatment
- FSWs face barriers** that affect their 1) willingness to be referred for CxCa screening and 2) completion of CxCa screening appointments
- Ugandan FSWs are at high risk for CxCa**

NEXT STEPS

- Develop and disseminate **HPV and CxCa educational materials** to Ugandan FSW population
- Assess for **barriers** preventing Ugandan FSWs from completing CxCa screening referrals
 - Address common misconceptions** on HPV, CxCa, and screening methods

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