

PC73 Acceptability of VCT among persons living in a high HIV Prevalence area in Zambia

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ABSTRACT TEXT

Background:

The successful completion of the Microbicides Development Programme (MDP) Phase III trial will partly depend on a high level of acceptability of Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT). This study examined the level of acceptability of VCT and factors associated with this acceptability among persons living in a high HIV prevalence sugar estate in Zambia.

Methodology:

A cross sectional survey was conducted in which systematic random samples were drawn from the general population for each sex. Totals of 170 males and 230 females were interviewed. The Chi-square test was used to compare proportions. The step forward logistic regression analysis was used to determine independent factors associated with acceptability of VCT. A p value of less than 5% was considered statistically significant.

Results:

The overall perceived acceptability of VCT was 67.8%, with no significant difference ($p=0.472$) between males (70.0%) and females (66.1%). Respondents who felt comfortable with a support group knowing their HIV status were 69% (OR=1.69, 95%CI 1.22, 2.35) more likely to accept VCT than persons who did not feel comfortable with a support group knowing their HIV status. Meanwhile, persons who reported that there were risks for knowing one's HIV status were 51% (OR=0.49, 95%CI 0.38, 0.64) less likely to accept VCT than respondents who reported that there were no risks for knowing one's HIV status. Furthermore, persons who reported that there were benefits for knowing one's HIV status were 2.66 (OR=2.66, 95%CI 1.80, 3.93) times more likely to accept VCT than respondents who reported that there were no benefits for knowing one's HIV status. Finally, respondents who would have discussed with their partners before going for HIV test were 46% (OR=1.46, 95%CI 1.05, 2.02) more likely to go for VCT and get results than persons who would not have discussed with their partners before going for HIV test.

Conclusion:

The level of VCT acceptability was moderately high. The Community Mobilisation unit of the MDP Zambia must increase its efforts to educate the people of the sugar estate about the benefits of VCT.

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