Public health emergencies

PO - (8585) - HIV, HBV AND HCV PREVALENCE, CO-INFECTIONS, RISK FACTORS AND AWARENESS AMONG STUDENTS IN A NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY

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Background

HIV, Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) are life threatening viral infections. Co-infections is possible since they share routes of transmission through exchange of blood/body fluids. Youths are the most vulnerable to HIV infection due to unsafe practices. There are no free counselling and testing for HBV/HCV in Nigeria hence many may not be aware of their HBV/HCV status. This study assessed prevalence, knowledge and risk factors of transmission among University students in order to provide preventive intervention.

Methods

Previously counselled/consenting University students (Total=903,M=502,F=428;Age range 16-40years;mean age 19years) were enrolled. Relevant information were collected through questionnaire. About 5ml of blood was collected from each student and serum recovered was analysed for detectable HIV antigens/antibodies using specific ELISA kit. HIV antigens/antibodies positives were analysed for detectable Hepatitis B surface Antigen and anti-HCV. The HIV and HBV positives were compared in terms of gender, age group, and risk factors by use of chi-square and Fischer exact tests, with two-tailed significance using SPSS version 20.0.1 for Windows.

Result

Of the 930 students examined, 630(67.7%) were sexually active and 104(16.5%) had multiple sex partners. Knowledge of HIV, HBV and HCV status was 55%, 36.3% and 4.2% respectively. Overall, 13(1.40%) students had detectable HIV antigens and/or antibodies, 5(38.5%) of whom were HBV positive, none had HCV infection. All HBV positive students were ignorant of their HBV status. HIV and HBV positive students fall within age range 15-24years with higher HIV/HBV prevalence in females than males. Statistical significance exist between HIV, HBV prevalence and gender, number of sex partners and sharing sharps with people of unknown HIV/HBV status (P= 0.005;0.002 and 0.005 respectively)

Conclusion

Knowledge about HBV and HCV is generally low among the students. Awareness campaigns specifically tailored towards educating young adults on HIV, HBV and HCV prevention/control should be encouraged.