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Poster Discussion Session

THPDB2 - Highlighting issues for women in clinical research, treatment and care

THPDB205 - Cervical cancer screening among HIV-positive women in rural Cambodia: a pilot programme

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Issues: Cervical cancer is the most common malignancy among women in Cambodia. Since HIV+ women tend to have persistent Human Papillomavirus infection they are at higher risk for cervical cancer than the general population. To help plan a nationwide screening programme in Cambodia that is at its early development, a pilot screening programme targeting HIV+ women was conducted in one HIV clinic, aiming at early detection and treatment of cervical abnormalities.

Description: A referral system was set-up between the HIV clinic and a near-by reproductive health clinic. HIV clinic doctors systematically referred all female patients for PAP-test screening until a total of 100 women was reached. Transportation to the reproductive health clinic was provided on the same day as the HIV consultation. After screening, follow up and referral for biopsy and treatment, as necessary, were organized by the HIV clinic staff.

Lessons learned: In a period of 2½ months, 100 women were screened, representing 14% of all HIV-positive women enrolled in the programme. Pre-cancer lesions / cervical cancer were common among women screened. 25 women had confirmed LSIL or HSIL on PAP-test and 22 of them underwent biopsy. 2 had endocervicitis, 19 had pre-cancerous lesions (CIN1-3), and one had carcinoma in-situ. All patients with pre-cancerous lesions or cancer were referred for either cryotherapy or hysterectomy. One woman died and 2 women were lost to follow-up. This good record is most likely due to the well established recall system of the HIV clinic, the involvement of the HIV clinic doctors, and the support for transportation.

Next steps: Our pilot programme indicated that there is a high yield in offering cervical cancer screening to HIV+ women, that it is feasible and can be integrated into HIV care where there is access to diagnosis and treatment. This is encouraging information for the planned nationwide screening programme.

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