



Research article

Awareness of nurses regarding HIV/AIDS

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Abstract

Background: Human immuno virus is one of the drastic infectious that causes deterioration of health condition. This causes total breakdown of the body systems particularly the immune system. The knowledge regarding AIDS in health care staff is very much essential as they remain in close contact with patients suffering from these deadly infections or disease. The health care professionals particularly the nurses should know the causes, pathophysiology, signs and symptoms, prevention and management of this deadly disease. In order to know that how much knowledge our nurses have in the tertiary care hospital of Kashmir, this mini-research study was carried out in emergency medicine and other departments of SKIMS, Soura and the results so obtained are mentioned in this report. **Aim:** The aim of this study was to assess the knowledge of nurses in a tertiary care hospital regarding HIV/ AIDS. **Material and methods:** A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted over a Brief period at tertiary care hospital in Srinagar amongst nursing staff of the Hospital. The data was collected by using a validated, modified structured questionnaire earlier used by Atul et al.

Results: The results of the study depicted that 45% of staff had an adequate knowledge regarding the topic while as maximum numbers of participants i.e. 55 % had high knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS and thus were highly aware. There was no participant having 0% of knowledge level. **Conclusion:** This can be concluded that the Nursing Officers were fully aware of the disease under study particularly the causes, modes of transmission, prevention and management of HIV/AIDS.

Key Words: HIV/AIDS, nurses, research

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1. Introduction

AIDS, the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome is a fatal illness caused by a retro virus known as the Human Immunodeficiency Virus which breaks down the body's immune system, leaving the victim vulnerable to a host of life threatening opportunistic infection, neurological disorders, or unusual malignancies. HIV/AIDS within decades of its described existence in 1981, has reached status of one of the most important public health disease. It is now the leading cause of mortality in Africa and the fourth leading cause of death worldwide. Globally, the number of people living with HIV is estimated to be nearly 33.4 million as per year 2008 data. Number of estimated people with newly infected HIV and AIDS-related death stood at 2.7 million and 2.0 million. Nearly, 40% of new HIV infection was among the age group of 15-24 years.[1] The first AIDS case in India was detected in Chennai in 1986. Now India accounts for 10% of worlds infected population and in sheer numbers it is

second largest population of HIV infected individuals. According to National AIDS Control Organization (NACO), the total number of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHA) in India(2009) was estimated at 24 lakh (19.3 30.4). Declining trend is observed from estimated level of 0.41% in 2000 through 0.36% in 2006 to 0.31% in 2009. All the high prevalence states show a clear declining trend in adult HIV prevalence. [2, 3]. In India, overall HIV prevalence among different population groups continues to reflect the concentrated epidemic situation in the country with 2.3 million people living with HIV/AIDS and estimated adult prevalence of 0.34% (0.25-0.43%).[4]

Menon and bharucha in 1994 in their research found that 85% of nurses did not apply the universal safety protocol, 13.5% Physicians were not aware that HIV was transmitted by blood, and 30% of consultants choose to avoid contact with HIV positive/ AIDS patients altogether. Moreover, 70% nurses thought that HIV and AIDS were synonymous terms. So it was necessary to know about the

knowledge level of our nurses about this disease condition.

Aims and objectives:

1. To assess the knowledge of nurses in a tertiary care hospital regarding HIV/ AIDS.

2. Material and method:

A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted over a Brief period at tertiary care hospital in Srinagar amongst nursing staff of the Hospital. Study was carried out from 1st may 2016 to 15th of the same month. Nurses working in General Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Surgery, and Casualty were included. Nurses working in the hospital at the time of study were included in the study. Those nurses who were not willing to participate in the study were excluded from the study. An oral/informed consent was obtained from the Nurses after properly explaining them about objectives of the study. The data was collected by using a validated, modified structured questionnaire earlier used by Atul et al, which were distributed amongst the Nurses who work in the time period of the study. The questionnaire was divided into 2 main sections and the information required was collected under following categories:

- 1) Demographic variables of nursing staff in the Hospital
- 2) Knowledge about HIV with special consideration given to its spread, mode of transmission, safety, Measures and universal precautions to be used and post exposure prophylaxis

3. Results and discussion:

Table No 1: Distribution of Subjects according to Age:

Age in years	Frequency	Percentage
20-30	10	50
31-40	06	30
41-50	04	50

Table No 2: Distribution of Subjects according to Gender:

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	05	25
Female	15	75

Table No 3: Distribution of Subjects according to Qualification:

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
GNM	2	10
B.Sc {Hon's} Nursing	14	70
B.Sc [p.b] Nursing	04	20
M.Sc Nursing	0	

Table No 4: Distribution of Subjects according to their Experience:

No. of Years	Frequency	Percentage
0-5	12	60
6-10	04	20
11-15	0	0
16-20	0	0
21-25	04	20

Table No 5: Awareness level of Subjects:

Category Score	Frequency	Percentage
High	11	55
Adequate	09	45
Low	0	0

The above tables depict that out of 20 study subjects who were selected, all gave consent and answered to the questionnaire. The study subjects were of the following age group. 50% of staff was in the age group of 20-30 years, 30% was in the age group of 31-40% and only 20% was in the age group of above 41 years. (N=20).

Majority of study subjects were females (75%) and only 25% were males. The qualification of the study subjects in the study were B. Sc. Nursing (70%), Diploma Nursing (10%) and about 20% were having post basic nursing as their qualification. 60% nurses had working experience of 0-5 yrs, only 20% nurses were having an experience of 6-10 years, and only 20% had 21-25 years of working experience. All the study subjects were aware about HIV/AIDS. This came to fore after analyzing the data so collected. In order to analyze the results, each correct response was given a score of 1 and incorrect response was made entitled to zero. For analysis three range scores were assigned to be regarded as low, adequate and high. Those participants having a score of 6-10 were having poor awareness level, those having score in range of 11-15 were assigned to adequate awareness category and those who secured 16-19 were highly aware regarding HIV/AIDS.

After the analysis the results were; no participant secured below 11. So no participant can be placed in the low category score. About 45% of staff had an adequate knowledge regarding the topic. Maximum numbers of participants i.e. 55 % had high knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS and thus were highly aware. The results of this study are in tune with the researches earlier carried out by the Som p, Bhattacharejee S et al (5) and Nyamathi A, Vatsa M et al (6)

Thus 55% of Nurses were found to have a high level of knowledge regarding HIV and 45% were found to have adequate knowledge regarding HIV. In this study 0% study subjects, had low level of knowledge regarding the topic under study. The results indicate that more than half of the nursing staff at the tertiary care hospital had high and adequate knowledge about HIV/ Aids and 0% of the

nursing staff had low knowledge regarding HIV/Aids. However steps can be taken so that to convert 45% adequate knowledge of nursing staff regarding HIV/Aids to good and excellent knowledge level, so as to enhance their understanding of the disease, transmission and its prevention and control, and also equip them for proper care to clients admitted in the hospital with the said ailment.

Delimitations:

The current study should be interpreted in light of some limitations. This survey used nursing staff, [now called as nursing officers] of a tertiary care hospital in Srinagar. The sample size was too small only 20 participants were involved in this mini research project. Therefore the results of the present study could not be generalized to other groups of nurses who are working in the same or other hospitals of the same state.

Recommendations:

Continuing Education programs can maintain the knowledge about HIV/AIDS, though the nurses here have good level of knowledge regarding the problem stated. However there is strong need for training programmes for Nurses working in the hospital, which should be organized intermittently to ensure health practices of nurses working in the hospital to ensure their safety and safeguard the interests of the patients. Through evaluating the knowledge towards HIV/AIDS among nursing staff, gaps can be identified as well as areas of importance for training and health care education amongst nursing staff can be promoted as well. The same study can be held in broader perspective with more number of samples and extending the same in other hospitals of the state or even taking the same study at large level with good number of samples with broad population like doctors, nurses, paramedics etc.

Conclusion

The study revealed that more than half of the nursing officers were having high level of knowledge and about 45% had adequate level of knowledge. There was no person from the nursing professionals who had low knowledge level. Thus all of the nursing officers were well versed with the Knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS. However there is scope for imparting education to them and programmers like CNE to boost and update their Knowledge and thus good level of knowledge can be changed to high level of knowledge.

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