PEDIATRIC HIV-AIDS IN NAIROBI: PREVALENCE, GENDER AND IMPLICATION FOR PREVENTION OF MOTHER TO CHILD TRANSMISSION

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ABSTRACT

Addressing Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Disease Syndrome in children is a significant global challenge and Kenya is not an exemption. Thus, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) status of infants should be determined soon after birth due to the fact that infants with HIV often develop immunodeficiency symptoms rapidly and can acquire life threatening opportunistic infections early in life. Besides this, the mortality rate of HIV infected infants is higher as compared to non-infected children. It is therefore important to quickly identify HIV infected infants to begin HIV care and management including anti-retroviral therapy and opportunistic infection prophylaxis. This will ultimately improve the infant's quality of life, prolong life span and decrease infant mortality rate. To address this challenge in Nairobi County of Kenya, children born to HIV infected mothers were recruited from Prevention of Mother to Children Transmission clinics within Nairobi, their demographic factors recorded, blood sample collected on Dried Blood Spot and transported to Kenya Medical Research Institute –HIV laboratory for diagnosis using Roche Amplicor HIV-1 Deoxy Ribonucleic Acid Test. The generated data was stored in MS –Excel, presented in graphs and charts, and analyzed using SPSS software. The pediatric HIV prevalence in Nairobi which has been lacking was determined to be 10.6%. Gender was significantly (p value= 0.05) associated with vertical transmission. Determination of HIV status provided useful information for care of infants born to HIV infected mothers. Those diagnosed positive were considered for initiation of anti-retroviral therapy upon meeting the Ministry of Health criteria. The prevalence data in association with demographic factors helped in necessitating and implementing policies that strengthens the prevention of mother to child transmissions.

Keywords: DNA-PCR, Gender, HIV, Prevalence, Pediatric, Roche Amplicor.