Disclosure of HIV diagnosis to infected children receiving care in University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Uyo, Nigeria

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Disclosure of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) diagnosis to infected children is still a challenge despite proven evidences that it has numerous social and medical benefits for the child and family. The aim of this study was to document the disclosure rate of HIV diagnosis to children in Uyo, Nigeria and determine the factors influencing disclosure or non-disclosure to these children. This was a descriptive cross-sectional study. A pre-tested and validated semi-structured questionnaire was administered to consenting parents/caregivers of Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) infected children aged 6 to 17 years in care at the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Unit of the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Uyo (UUTH) from January-June, 2015. 122 caregivers, (26 males and 96 females) giving a male to female ratio of 1:3.7, aged 20 to 60 years were interviewed. 68 (55.8%) of them had post-secondary education. 20 (16.4%) of the children aged 9-17 years (13.3±2.4 years) had been disclosed. Age of the children, gender, orphan status, their level of schooling and their socio-economic class positively affected disclosure. Also, caregivers between ages 30 and 49 years who were more educated were more likely to disclose the HIV status of their children. Commonest reason for non-disclosure was child being sad (29.5%). Others were blaming the parents (18.0%), not understanding the import of the diagnosis (9.8%) and 6.6% feared child disclosing to others. 44 (37.7%) did not give reasons for non-disclosure. 67 (54.9%) of the caregivers who did not disclose said they would do so after 10 years of age. A national protocol for Pediatric HIV disclosure is desirable.

Biography

Ofonime Tony Dixon-Umo has completed her Fellowship training with the National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria, Faculty of Pediatrics. She is a Lecturer with the University of Uyo, Nigeria and a Senior Honorary Consultant Pediatrician with the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Uyo, Nigeria. She has published 10 papers in reputed journals and is a Member of the Hospital Medical Audit Committee. She is In Charge of the Pediatric HIV/AIDS Clinic.

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