

Getting The HIV Testing Message Across - 'Sri Lankan Experience'

Effectiveness of a poster and a guide in improving the knowledge and practice of HIV testing among intern medical officers of eight teaching hospitals in Sri Lanka: A Quasi-experimental study

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Introduction

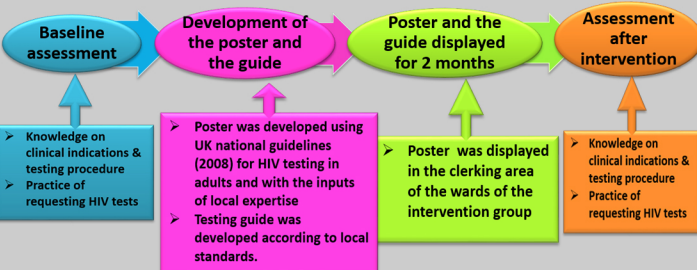
Promotion of provider initiated HIV testing is recognized as an effective strategy in improving case detection. However due to lack of knowledge among intern medical officers, for many patients testing had been offered late in spite of repeated hospital admissions with HIV related illnesses. Therefore the aim of this study was to assess the effectiveness of a poster and a guide in improving HIV testing among intern medical officers in the ward setting.

Methods and Materials

Quasi Experimental Study

Sample selection

182 intern medical officers attached to 8 teaching hospitals in Sri Lanka were divided into **intervention** and **control** groups. Each group consisted of 91 participants. They were from medical, surgical and gynaecology units.



Poster

CLINICAL INDICATIONS FOR HIV TESTING
TEST EARLY TO SAVE LIVES

- Neurological**
 - Cerebral toxoplasmosis
 - Primary cerebral lymphoma
 - Cryptococcal meningitis
 - Progressive multifocal Leucoencephalopathy
 - Aseptic meningitis / encephalitis
 - Space occupying lesion of unknown cause
 - Guillain - Barré syndrome
 - Transverse myelitis
 - Peripheral neuropathy
 - Dementia
 - Cerebral abscess
- Ophthalmological**
 - Cytomegalovirus retinitis
 - Infective retinal diseases including herpes viruses and toxoplasma infections
 - Any unexplained retinopathy
- Dermatological**
 - Kaposi's sarcoma
 - Papular pruritic eruptions
 - Severe or recalcitrant seborrheic dermatitis
 - Severe or recalcitrant psoriasis
 - Multidermatomal or recurrent herpes zoster
 - Severe / atypical skin conditions not responding to standard treatment
- Respiratory**
 - Tuberculosis
 - Pneumocystis pneumonia
 - Recurrent / severe bacterial pneumonia
 - Aspergillosis
- Haematological**
 - Any unexplained blood dyscrasia
 - Thrombocytopenia
 - Neutropenia
 - Lymphopenia
 - Unexplained high ESR
 - Unexplained anaemia
- Oncological**
 - Non - Hodgkin's lymphoma
 - Anal cancer or anal intraepithelial dysplasia
 - Hodgkin's lymphoma
 - Castleman's disease
- Gastrointestinal**
 - Persistent cryptosporidiosis
 - Oral Oesophageal candidiasis
 - Oral hairy leukoplakia
 - Chronic diarrhoea of unknown cause
 - Weight loss of unknown cause
 - Salmonella, shigella or campylobacter diarrhoea
 - Hepatitis B infection
 - Hepatitis C infection
 - Necrotising gingivitis / periodontitis
- Gynaecological**
 - Cervical cancer
 - Vaginal intraepithelial neoplasia
 - Cervical intraepithelial neoplasia grade 2 or above
- Other**
 - Pyrexia of unknown origin
 - Recurrent / severe sinusitis
 - Recurrent bacterial infections (e.g. meningitis, sepsis, osteomyelitis, pneumonia etc.)
 - Systemic fungal infections
 - Unexplained proteinuria
 - Extra pulmonary tuberculosis / Other mycobacterial infections
 - Persistent generalized lymphadenopathy

For further information contact nearest STD Clinic

Always request an HIV test even in the absence of above indications considering the possible behavioural risk factors of your patient.

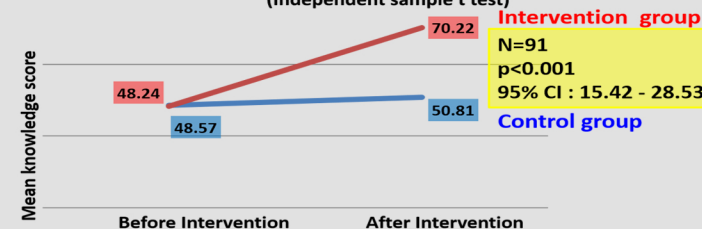
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Recommendations

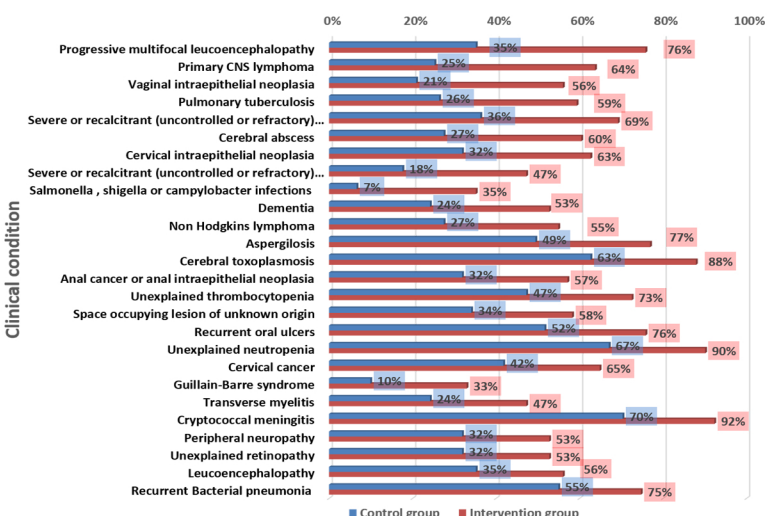
Reducing the high number of late diagnoses and improving early case detection is a public health priority. Displaying of the poster and the guide island wide in ward settings as well as in clinic settings in both government and private sectors.

Results

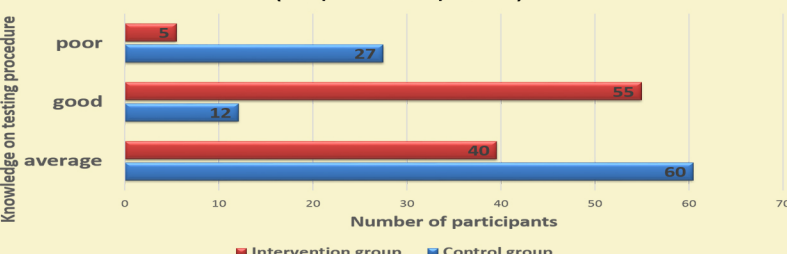
Improvement of the mean knowledge on clinical indications following the intervention (Independent sample t test)



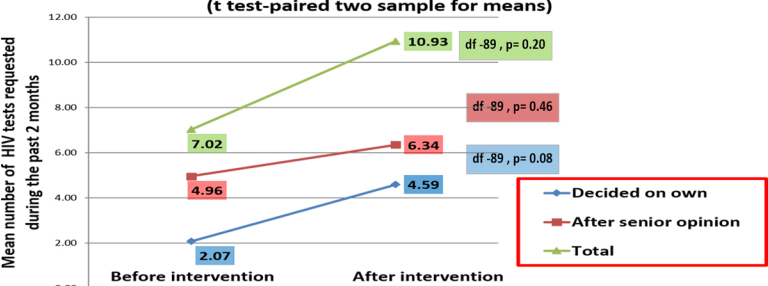
Knowledge on clinical indications > 20% improvement following intervention



Improvement of knowledge on testing procedure following the intervention (Independent sample t test)



Mean number of tests requested by one participant in the intervention group (t test-paired two sample for means)



Conclusion

The Knowledge on clinical indications for HIV testing and testing procedure has significantly increased following the introduction of the poster and the guide to the ward setting. The practice of ordering HIV testing by the intern medical officers has also improved following the intervention. Poster and the testing guide are shown to be an effective way to improve HIV testing in the ward setting.