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Awareness, knowledge, and utilisation of pre-exposure and post-exposure prophylaxis against HIV among young women in Mbarara City

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Abstract:

With an HIV prevalence of 8.1%, Mbarara is one of the areas struggling with high HIV infection rates in Uganda. The study was aimed at determining the level of awareness, knowledge, and utilisation of pre-exposure and post-exposure prophylaxis against HIV among adolescent girls and young women in Mbarara City. It was a community-based survey conducted among 150 randomly selected adolescent girls and young women aged 15–25 years in Mbarara City. The majority of the study respondents, 103 (68.7%), had their sex debut before the age of 18 years, and most, 59 (39.3%), have had more than 4 sexual partners in life. Slightly more than half, 78 (52.0%), had 1–2 sexual partners at the time of the study. Only 49 (32.7%) and only 64 (42.7%) had heard about pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), respectively. Most adolescent girls and young women in Mbarara City are sexually active but with limited knowledge about PrEP and PEP, which predisposes them to a high risk of HIV.

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