

Pillay V, Cloete A, Jooste S, Rehle T. Awareness of HIV Status among South Africans. 3rd SA AIDS conference (Durban) 2007

Background and objectives

Awareness of one's HIV status plays an important role in our national efforts to influence HIV risk behavior. This paper analyses awareness of HIV status among South Africans in 2005.

Methods

A probability sample of over 16000 adults aged 15 years and older were interviewed as part of a national household survey conducted in South Africa in 2005. Awareness of HIV status was analysed by sex and age differentials, type of residence, race group, education level and marital status. Weighted analysis was performed to take into account the complex multi-level sampling design used. Chi-squared analysis was used for significance testing.

Results

Among 16151 study participants, 30.5% (4937) reported they ever had an HIV test, the majority of them (71.9%) underwent an HIV test less than 2 years ago. 91.1% (4432/4937) had received their test result and were aware of their status. More females were aware of their status than males (30.2% vs. 24.6%; $p < 0.001$). Awareness of HIV status also varied significantly by age, with youth aged 15-24 years (17.7%) and older people above 50 years (15.5%) considerably less aware of their HIV status than adults aged 25-49 (39.1%). Only 23.9% of black South Africans were aware of their status compared to 40.5% in the other race groups. The analysis by marital status revealed much higher awareness among married people (34.9%) compared with single people (22.9%). Among the individuals who tested positive in the 2005 survey, only 32.9% ever had been tested for HIV and were aware of their status.

Conclusion

The analysis revealed lower levels of awareness of HIV status especially among young people and black South Africans. Intensified efforts need to address these discrepancies of awareness of HIV status in our population.

Rehle T, Dorrington R, Shisana O, Pillay V, Puren A. National HIV incidence estimates: direct measures compared with mathematical modeling. 3rd SA AIDS conference (Durban) 2007

Background

The 2005 South African national survey on HIV, Behavior and Communication included HIV incidence testing of blood specimens in its survey protocol. To examine the plausibility of directly measured HIV incidence estimates this study compares laboratory-based estimates of HIV incidence to estimates derived from mathematical modeling.

Methods

15 851 specimens tested for HIV provided an unparalleled large sample to estimate HIV incidence on a national scale for South Africa. The detection of recent infections was performed on confirmed HIV positive samples, using the BED capture enzyme immunoassay optimised for dried blood spot (DBS) specimens. BED HIV incidence calculations applied adjustment procedures that were recently revised and approved by CDC for subtype C blood specimens. Modeled HIV incidence estimates were calculated using the ASSA2003 model.

Results

BED HIV incidence in the study population aged two years and older was 1.4%, compared to 1.3% estimated by the ASSA model. A BED HIV incidence rate of 2.4% was found among individuals aged 15-49 years. The modeled HIV incidence was 2.2% for this age group. Based on BED incidence estimates, females account for 90% of the recent HIV infections among youth aged 15-24