



Admitted Patients Attitude Towards HIV Testing

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Background

The purpose of our study is to learn if our admitted patients expect to have HIV testing routinely during an admission. Our hypotheses suggest that: (a.) more than 25% of admitted patients expect that they will be routinely HIV tested during their admission without a separate consent form. (b.) over 50% of admitted patients will not be aware of the State requirement for separate HIV consent. (c.) over 50% of the patients think that HIV testing should be routine and should not require a separate consent. (d.) over 50% do not know the steps required to get HIV tested. (e.) over 50% of the patients have no idea what the HIV prevalence is, nor the percent of undiagnosed positives.

In an earlier study, we showed that about a quarter of our ED patients believe that UH tests them for HIV without specific consent. Less than 50% believed that UH did not test them without a special consent. 44% of our patients believed that if they have been in the hospital and no one told them they had AIDS or HIV, then they are negative. This is a very dangerous assumption because undiagnosed HIV positive patients are responsible for 80% of transmissions. A third of the patients agreed or strongly agreed that they can catch AIDS or HIV by having blood drawn in the hospital. Only 60% knew that HIV testing required a special consent.

In our previous work, we only surveyed people in the UH waiting room. It is possible that these people are systematically different from admitted patients. Also our previous surveys were not designed to specifically address the expectations of admitted patients. These results were not expected, but need to be confirmed for the actual hospitalized population.

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Abstract

Earlier studies showed that a great percentage of the ED population assumed that if they were admitted to the ED and no one told them they were positive for HIV, then they are negative. Also, more than half of the patients were not familiar with the state requirement of a special consent form for HIV testing. We decided to investigate whether admitted patients had different expectations for HIV testing and whether or not their knowledge was more advanced than that of the ED patients. We found that admitted patients were a lot less knowledgeable about the HIV testing process and were less open to HIV testing.

Methods

CITI certified Research Assistants (RAs) asked admitted patients ages 18-65 to fill out anonymous surveys. Patients from the ED that had been tagged for admission as well as patients that have already been admitted were asked to participate.

210 surveys have been collected and analyzed using simple statistics in Microsoft Excel.

Results

Attitude towards testing

165 (79%) patients think that the hospital should test everyone who is admitted for HIV. 173 (82%) think that HIV testing should be a part of a routine health care screening. 58 (28%) thought that HIV testing should require a special consent form.

Understanding of HIV testing and requirements

70 (33%) patients expect that the hospital routinely tests everyone who is admitted for HIV. 92 (44%) patients think that HIV testing is a part of routine health care screening and 167 (82%) patients thought that HIV testing required a special consent form. 54 (26%) patients believe that in order to get tested for HIV they just need to ask for it. 77 (37%) patients believe that in order to get tested, they need to ask for a test and sign a consent form. 19 (9%) believed that they need to ask for a test, sign a special consent form, and get pre-test counseling, and 54 (26%) thought they besides all of the above, they are also required to get post-test counseling

Results

Level of knowledge

24 (11%) patients thought that less than 10% of HIV infected people do not know that they are infected, 34 (16%) thought that 10-30% of HIV infected people do not know that they are infected, 90 (43%) patients thought that 30-60% of HIV positive people do not know that they are infected, 33 (16%) patients thought that the percentage of infected people that don't know that they are infected is 60-90%, and 25 (12%) patients thought that more than 90% of HIV infected people do not know that they are infected.

When the patients were asked about when people ages 18-65 should get HIV testing (multiple answers allowed), 78 (37%) of patients answered that people ages 18-65 should get tested every 6 months, 71 (34%) answered that people should get tested whenever they have blood drawn at the hospital, 67 (34%) patients thought that people should get tested whenever they are admitted to the hospital, 65 (31%) agreed that people should get tested whenever they start prenatal care, and 116 (55%) thought that people should get HIV testing whenever they are tested for sexually transmitted diseases.

Conclusion

In this study our objective was to learn whether or not admitted patients' attitude and knowledge about HIV testing was any different from the ED patients' attitude and knowledge. Only 26% of admitted patients were aware that HIV testing requires a special consent form, compared to 60% of the ED patients. Only 31% of admitted patients wanted to be tested upon their admission to the hospital, while 88% of the ED patients would want ED offer HIV testing. 33% of the admitted patients thought that the hospital routinely tests everyone who is admitted for HIV, while 27% of the ED patients thought that ED tests all its patients for HIV. Admitted patients are less knowledgeable and are less open to HIV testing than the ED patients.

