DISCLOSURE 101: IMPROVING ADHERENCE THROUGH DISCLOSURE SUPPORT

LANTCHE WM, KESSENG KD, BOSSOLO J, ONGYATE Y G, ATEBA N F, MSELLATI P, BOULA A, KOKI NDOMBO P O

CHANTAL BIYA DAY CARE UNIT EXPERIENCE, YAOUNDE, CAMEROON
Background

- WHO recommendation: HIV+ children informed of their own HIV status during school age (i.e. 6–12 years old) before sexual exploration and the complexities of adolescent development

- In Cameroon, lack of national guidelines for disclosure to HIV+ children
  - Few HIV+ children disclosed for their status early
  - Late disclosure, often accidental
  - Fatal consequences for survival (e.g. treatment abandonment, suicide, etc.)
What we did

Objective: to implement and assess a standardized disclosure process for children living with HIV 2014-2016
How we did it

Disclosure process: 5 stages

1. Identification of children eligible for disclosure (aged 7 years old or more) and contact with parent/guardian
2. Interview with parent/guardian: presentation of disclosure, parent/guardian permission → child enrolment in disclosure process
3. Preparedness interviews with the child organized by themes and spread out over the time
4. Disclosure of HIV status to the child in presence of parent/guardian
5. Follow-up of parent/guardian and the child
Findings – parental/guardian involvement

• 352 children/adolescents identified
• 325 parents/guardians contacted and interviewed (92% reached)
• 322 parents/guardians agreed to include their child in disclosure process after two interviews on average (99% agreed)
• 100 parents/guardians reluctant for a while before agreeing:
  • fear of the child's reaction (n=28)
  • fear of family secret to other people (n=22)
  • fear of discovery of parent’s HIV+ status by the child (n=4)
Findings - disclosure

- 180 children completely disclosed
  - Median age=12 years
  - Median time to disclosure= 3 months
  - 169 disclosures by the psychologist in presence of parent/guardian (93% of children)
  - 11 disclosures by the parent/guardian in presence of psychologist (7% of children)
- 76 joined a support group after the disclosure (42% of children)
Reactions after complete disclosure

Immediate reactions (before 48 hours) (n=102)
- No reaction: 84%
- Tears: 6%
- Sad: 9%
- Looking appeased: 1%

Late reactions (post 48 hours) (n=43)
- Being calm: 56%
- Looking confident: 12%
- Being appeased: 12%
- Concerned about cure: 18%
- Concerned about future: 2%
Challenges & successes

• Challenges
  ▪ Disclosure=very long process (average 3 months)
  ▪ Parents not willing to attend the health facility after disclosure
  ▪ Laboratories issues in resource-limited settings → impairing VL exams realization

• Successes
  ▪ Enrolment of disclosed adolescents in a peer supported group that enhance them to share experience and acquire autonomy towards their treatment
  ▪ Standardization of disclosure process in the clinic → involvement of all the psychosocial companions in the clinic
Thank you!