

Awareness about HIV/AIDS among health care workers (HCW's) of Assam

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ABSTRACT

No other word engenders as much fear, revulsion, desperate and helplessness as HIV/AIDS. People with HIV in India frequently encounter discrimination while seeking and receiving healthcare services. Assam has shown a quantum jump in the number of HIV/AIDS cases. The knowledge and attitude of HCW's in relation to HIV infection is an important factor influencing the willingness and ability of people with AIDS to access care. These type of study are still scanty in the state. So, the present study has been conducted with an aim to assess HIV-related knowledge, attitude and risk perception among a group of HCW's in Assam. A cross-sectional survey was done on a group of HCW's from five different health care settings of Assam. A pre-refined interview schedule have been developed to gather the informations on demographic profile. An attitude and knowledge scale was developed to record HIV-related knowledge, attitude and perception. The HCW's in this study generally had a positive attitude in caring for people with HIV. However, substantial concerns about providing care and the risk of occupational infection with HIV was perceived by most of the HCW's to be high. Knowledge of HIV transmission and perception of risk was not associated with willingness to provide care. This study investigated HIV-related knowledge, attitudes and risk perceptions among a group of HCW's in Assam, and found a general willingness to provide care for patients with HIV, tempered by self-concerns regarding the provision of such care. These findings highlight a need for programmes that promote the occupational safety for HCW's in Assam and to value the people with HIV in such HIV awareness training of HCW's.