

## Effectiveness of an IEC (Information, Education and Communication) Campaign on the Knowledge, Attitude and Practices Related to Cervical Cancer and its Prevention among Reproductive Women in an Urban Slum of Central Delhi

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### Background

Cervical cancer claimed over 250,000 deaths in 2005, of which 80% occurred in developing countries. In India it is projected to rise by 25% over the next 10 years. Lack of awareness is considered to be a barrier in the control of cervical cancer. A study from Kolkata reported limited knowledge about cervical cancer. Another study revealed a correlation of literacy with higher awareness levels. Studies related to assessing effectiveness of awareness campaigns related to cervical cancer are scanty in India.

### Aims & Objectives

1. To assess the knowledge, attitude and practices related to risk factors, symptoms, signs and prevention of cervical cancer amongst women aged 18-45 yrs .
2. To launch an IEC campaign related to risk factors, signs and symptoms and prevention of Cervical Cancer among the study subjects.
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of the IEC campaign in terms of changes in the knowledge, attitude and practices related to cervical cancer.

### Material and Methods

It was a community based interventional study carried out in an urban slum of central Delhi. Seventy women (18-45 yrs.) selected by systematic random sampling were interviewed using a pre-tested semi structured

schedule before and after group discussion on cervical cancer.

Data was analyzed using SPSS version 17.0.

### Results

The median family size was 6 in the study population, 29% were illiterate, and 72.9% were housewives. Before intervention, 70% study subjects had heard about cancer. Intervention led to an increase in naming two common women cancers (38.6% in pre to 94.3% post intervention). The change in awareness post intervention regarding signs and symptoms were: bleeding in between periods(+55.8%); bleeding after intercourse(+57.2%); foul smelling discharge (+57.2%). The change in awareness about risk factors were : multiple sex partners (+37.1%); early marriage(+61.4%); HPV infection (+37.1%); early sexual debut(+41.4%). The changes related to pap smear was (32.9% in pre to 94.3% in post -test), about HPV vaccine (8.6% in pre to 50% in post-test). In pre-test, 3.4% relied on home remedies for vaginal discharge; and 5.7% had got pap smear test done. Attitudinal changes observed were: agreement on the predisposition of multiple sexual partners to cervical cancer, examination by a gynecologist (+8.6%) etc.

### Conclusions

Group discussion was effective in changing knowledge and attitude on some aspects of cervical cancer. More such educational sessions are required to sustain the effect in the population.