

PSYCHOSOCIAL BURDEN OF ABNORMAL PAP SMEARS AMONG HIV-INFECTED WOMEN AT CHON BURI HOSPITAL, THAILAND

Mangala PH Jayathunge¹, Chureeratana Bowanwatanuwong²,
Wirach Maek-a-nantawat¹, Benjaluck Phonrat¹ and Punnee Pitisuttithum¹

¹Department of Clinical Tropical Medicine, Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University, Bangkok, ² Department of Internal Medicine, Provincial Hospital, Chon Buri, Thailand

Abstract. This retrospective case-control study assessed the psychological burden of abnormal Pap smears, and their prevalence and characteristics among HIV-infected women attending an HIV clinic. Women with positive ($n = 73$) and negative Pap-smear results ($n = 317$) were assessed for psychosocial burden using 4 questionnaires: Psycho-Social Impact of Abnormal Pap Smears (PEAPS-Q), Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS), Work Productivity and Impairment (WPAI) and the EURO-Qol Thermometer. The prevalence of pre-cervical cancer lesions in HIV infected woman was 17.5% (ASCUS 2.9%, LSIL 3.8%, HSIL 7.4%, SCC 1.7%, and atypical glandular cells including adenocarcinoma 1.7%). HIV infected women with abnormal Pap smears showed higher anxiety levels on the HADS questionnaire ($p = 0.015$); this had a significant effect on regular daily activities ($p = 0.009$) per the WPAI questionnaire compared to HIV positive women with normal Pap smear. Ever married HIV infected woman with an abnormal Pap smear had a significantly lower psychosocial burden using the PEAPS-Q questionnaire ($p < 0.001$). After adjusting for age and duration since last Pap smear, the education level of the patient was a strong predictor for anxiety. Patients, with a college education had significantly lower anxiety ($p = 0.001$, 95% CI -5.74 to -1.37) than those with lower or higher education. Women with HSIL were more anxious ($p = 0.014$, 95% CI 0.491- 4.39) than those with low grade or normal lesions.

Key words: Pap smears, psychosocial burden, HIV-infected, human papillomavirus, HPV, cervical cancer, Thailand

Correspondence: Prof Punnee Pitisuttithum,
Clinical Infectious Diseases Research Unit,
Department of Clinical Tropical Medicine, Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University,
420/6 Ratchawithi Road, Ratchathewi,
Bangkok 10400, Thailand.

Tel: 66 (0) 2643 5599; Fax: 66 (0) 2643 5598

E-mail tmppt@mahidol.ac.th