

Knowledge and Attitude of Pregnant Women towards Mother to Child Transmission (MTCT) of HIV and AIDS in a Local Clinic in Mafikeng, South Africa

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ABSTRACT Lack of adequate knowledge might be a factor in MTCT of HIV/AIDS since breastfeeding has been implicated as the most common mode of transmission. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the knowledge and attitudes of pregnant women towards MTCT of HIV/AIDS. The study design was descriptive and cross sectional. Data was collected using self-constructed questionnaires. 175 pregnant women participated in the study. The age range was between 18 and 40 years. The results indicated that majority of pregnant women 79(45%) knew that HIV/AIDS is a sexually transmitted disease, 77 (44%) said it is a virus, 12(7%) had no knowledge about HIV/AIDS, 4(2.3%) were undecided. The majority of respondents 67 (38.3%) had positive attitude towards MTCT of HIV/AIDS. They also agreed that HIV can be transmitted from an infected mother to her unborn child. 82 (46.9%) strongly agreed that voluntary counselling during pregnancy does benefit pregnant women, 74(42.3%) agreed, 6 (3.4%) disagreed, 4 (2.3%) strongly disagreed and 9 (5.1%) were undecided. Though level of awareness of HIV/AIDS among pregnant women in this local clinic was high, knowledge about MTCT was found to be inadequate. Health education regarding MTCT of HIV/AIDS needs to be encouraged and promoted through public campaign.