

Positive Women, Positive Midwifery

Caring for Women with HIV in Pregnancy: An Ethical Perspective



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UN Global targets(2011)

1. Halve sexual transmission of HIV by 2015
2. Reduce transmission of HIV among people who inject drugs
- 3. Ensure that no children are born with HIV by 2015**
4. Increase access to antiretroviral therapy to get 15 million people on life saving treatment by 2015

UN Global targets.....

5. Reduce TB deaths in people living with HIV by 50% by 2015
6. Reach a significant level of annual global expenditure (between \$22 billion and \$24 billion) in low and middle-income countries
7. Eliminate gender inequalities and gender-based abuse and violence and increase the capacity of women and girls to protect themselves from HIV

UN Global targets.....

- 8. Eliminate stigma and discrimination against people living with and affected by HIV through promotion of laws and policies that ensure the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms**
9. Eliminate HIV-related restrictions on entry, stay and residence
10. Eliminate parallel systems for HIV-related services to strengthen integration of the AIDS response in global health and development efforts

Timeline and HIV-Stigma

- History of HIV spans over 30 years
- There was a time when being HIV Positive was tantamount to a death sentence
 - There was limited knowledge of what HIV +ve really meant
 - There was also no known treatment for HIV

Timeline and HIV-Stigma....

- Current Status of HIV
- A lot of research has now been conducted
 - We know a lot about what a positive HIV Status means
 - There are proven pharmaceutical treatments to control the HIV virus
 - The quality of life can be greatly improved for people affected with HIV on therapies available

Why Is There A Need To Discuss This Issue?

- Ignorance on what being HIV Positive (HIV +ve) means for the midwife/mother relationship
- There is a lingering stigma and fear that HIV+ve pregnant women pose a risk to the midwife

Battling stigma

- “She should just not be having children”
- “ Right, gloves for everything, and we had better change into scrubs”
- “The HIV lady”

Is There Justification For HIV-stigma?

- There is no reason why any person should experience discrimination for being HIV +ve
- In some cases, reactions to the HIV stigma discourages pregnant women from accepting life saving treatments and programmes for fear of their status being disclosed

Why Have This Discussion?

- There is need for health-care providers to treat all service users in an equitable manner irrespective of their background

Why Should We Be Having This Discussion?....

Midwives need to be equipped with knowledge and a set of standards that can be applied to all service users irrespective of:

- Income
- Social status
- Educational Background
- Medical history
- Protected Characteristics

How Can We Develop Standards Applicable To All?

- Make use of “Principles of Ethics” as drivers for standardized care to all women irrespective of:
 - who the care-giver is (*vis-a-vis* values or beliefs)
 - who the woman is
 - what the HIV status of the woman is

Key Principles of Ethics Applicable

- ***Respect of all persons***
 - Respecting decisions of autonomous persons
 - Protecting persons who lack decision making capacity (i.e. not autonomous)
 - Respect for human dignity and integrity

Key Principles of Ethics Applicable...

- ***Autonomy***

- Respect for the right to self determination on the basis of full and accurate information

- ***Beneficence***

- The obligation for us to act in the best interests of women

Key Principles of Ethics Applicable...

- ***Non-maleficence*** (i.e. the obligation not to harm)
 - **Minimise risks to women**
 - Obligation to protect vulnerable groups & individuals on the basis of the potential benefits
 - To respect privacy and confidentiality

Key Principles of Ethics Applicable...

- ***Justice***

- Indicates an obligation for us to treat people fairly

- It guides us to ensure that benefits and burdens be distributed fairly within society

Ethical Theories Applicable

- Utilitarian Perspective
 - Embodies the idea that our actions should be evaluated according to their impact or consequences
 - We should minimise risk of discriminating against individuals on account of our actions

Ethical Theories Applicable....

- Deontological Perspective
 - Emphasis put on generalizable rules, obligations or standards to guide practice ethics
 - Requires each individual to receive the same quality of treatment and care irrespective of who is giving the care

Ethical Theories Applicable....

- Virtue Ethics
 - Focuses on motivation or the character of the care-giver than the action taken
 - Virtues function as means to safeguard human relations

Ethical Theories Applicable....

- It is clear that in order to individualize the care for pregnant women there are many avenues that can be taken using the ethics approach

What Should Women Expect From Midwives?

- Confidentiality
 - Right to privacy of HIV status
- Informed Consent
 - Right to be provided with treatment and care options in order to make informed choices
 - Midwives Rules & Standards 2012
 - NMC Code of Conduct 2008

What Should Women Expect From Midwives?

- Non-Maleficence
 - Women & their families should never come to harm whilst we care for them
- Access to health and treatment

What Should Women Expect From Midwives?....

- Right to safe birth practices
- Right to equality of treatment afforded to other women

What the Public Should Expect of Midwives

- To treat all women and their families with respect and dignity
- To be competent skilled practitioners

What the Public Should Expect of Midwives.....

- To provide evidence based care to all women
- To be mindful of the complex decisions to be made by women with HIV during testing in pregnancy and postpartum period

Q& A

- Can a healthcare professional disclose the HIV status of a woman to a third party?

Can a healthcare professional disclose the HIV status of a woman to a third party?..

Discussion Points:

- Is there a need to disclose a woman's HIV status?
- What is the true motive for wishing to disclose a woman's HIV status

Can a healthcare professional disclose the HIV status of a woman to a third party?....

- To protect that person from ‘perceived ‘ harm?
- To protect others from ‘perceived’ harm?

Q&A

- Should an HIV Positive health care worker disclose their status to their clients?

Should an HIV Positive health care worker disclose their status to clients?

- Discussion Points:
- Is there a need to disclose a care-giver's status pregnant women?
- What is the true motive for wishing to disclose a care-giver's status to women?

Why consider Ethics in Midwifery?

- Ethics is part of everyday life and allows us to explore the virtues of a good midwife

What are the virtues of a good midwife?

- Caring -attentiveness and responsive to the needs of women
- Conscientiousness-put effort into working out what is right
- Compassion-respond sensitively to the situation of others
- Discernment- make judgements and decisions without undue influence by such things as fear

Summary

- HIV-positive women and their partners planning to have children should receive pre-conceptual counselling on HIV testing in pregnancy, HIV transmission risks, long term health and possible effects of antiretroviral medication on the fetus, Care planning with Multidisciplinary Team

Summary

- The role of the midwife in complex pregnancies is to act as a co-ordinator of care and a facilitator of the 'normal' aspects of the pregnancy and childbirth
- The status of midwives in a country reflects the status of women and the value placed on them by society. To improve one is to empower the other.....SO Let us do what is right for everyone

Video Clip- Chief Nursing Officer for England

- Health Education England, NHS & Professional bodies e- resources-
- <http://www.e-lfh.org.uk/projects/compassion-in-practice/>

Further Reading

- Fakoya A; Lamba H; Mackie N; Nandwani R; Brown A; Bernard EJ; Gilling-Smith C; Lacey C; Sherr L; Claydon P; Wallage S; Gazzard B. (2007) **UK Guidelines for the management of sexual and reproductive health of people living with HIV infection** [Accessed-
<http://www.bhiva.org>]
- Kelly C. et al. (2013) **Every pregnant woman needs a midwife- The experiences of HIV affected women in maternity care.** *Midwifery*, 29 p132-138

References

- DoH 2007 **HIV Infected Health Care Workers: Guidance on management and patient notification** HMSO
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- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) (2013) **Global AIDS response progress reporting 2014: construction of core indicators for monitoring the 2011UN political declaration on HIV/AIDS** [Accessed:
<http://www.unaids.org>]