

Poly-Drug Use And Unsafe Sexual Health Seeking Behaviour Amongst Young Women Who Inject Drugs Living With Viral Hepatitis : A Case Study Across Five (5) High Risk Local Government Areas In Lagos, Nigeria.

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Background:

Poly-drug use is linked to unintended high incidence of viral hepatitis B & C and other sexually transmitted infections. Evidence relating to increased drug –related harm amongst Young Women living with Hepatitis B & C in lieu with descriptive patterns of poly-drug use (methamphetamine /crack cocaine / synthetic cannabis / Alcohol) and associated poor health seeking behavior has been of important significance towards ensuring gender-sensitive harm reduction programming for Young Women Who Inject Drugs (WWUID).

Methods:

We used and examined data from a cross-sectional study, which we recruited 60 participants aged 18 - 30yrs across five (5) Local Government Areas in Lagos State, Nigeria between May 1,2022 to October 31,2022 who are reportedly ardent poly-drug users and living with viral hepatitis B&C.

Findings:

From the 60 study participants:

25.8 participants (43%) use opiates;

21.6 participants (36%) use crack cocaine;

25.8 participants (43%) use methamphetamine;

24.6 participants (41%) use one or more drugs ;

40 participants (67%) live with Viral Hepatitis B

19.8 participants (33%) live with viral hepatitis C

21 participants (35%) disclosed their Viral Hepatitis/ Treatment status .

However, smoking ($p < 0.0001$), and viral hepatitis treatment non-adherence ($p < 0.0001$). Poly-drug amongst Young WWIDs use was associated with prevalence of condomless sex with viral hepatitis sero-concordant male partners (24% to 78%), condomless sex with viral hepatitis sero-discordant male partners (17% to 69%). Opiates , Methamphetamine and Crack-cocaine overdose was more strongly associated with higher-viral hepatitis B & C-risk and condomless sex than were other commonly used drugs in the research community.

Conclusion/Interpretation

Poly-drug use amongst Young WWID is strongly associated with condomless sex and non adherence to viral hepatitis treatment. Specialist support services for Young WWID with Viral hepatitis B& C who use recreational drugs might be beneficial in the reduction of harm and prevention of transmission of viral hepatitis B&C infections.