2017
World Indigenous Peoples’ Conference on Viral Hepatitis
Viral Hepatitis among Indigenous Peoples of Nigeria: “The Tale of the Neglected Folks”

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OUTLINE

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INTRODUCTION

• Nigeria has a population of over 170 million, with more than 250 ethnic groups

• Tagged the ‘giant of Africa’

• Indigenous people make up two-thirds of the population

• Studies have shown high burden of viral hepatitis sub-Saharan Africa
INTRODUCTION…

• Prevalence is on the increase in Nigeria

• Nigeria has recorded very high viral hepatitis-related mortality rates

• Rural communities with concentration of indigenous people are worse-hit by viral hepatitis with fatal consequences

• Limited access to care aggravate the situation of this vulnerable group
This presentation enumerates the pains, agony and experiences of viral hepatitis patients in Nigeria.
OBJECTIVES

• To showcase impacts of viral hepatitis on indigenous people of Nigeria

• To enumerate the various challenges posed by lack of access to care and ways to address these challenges

• To harness the best indigenous approaches of intervention
INVESTIGATIONS

Awareness and advocacy on hepatitis has been on by our organization (GVDI); and research involving patients

Infected individuals call, visit and ask for relevant information about hepatitis

During calls and visits we seek to know their pains and experiences with viral hepatitis

About two hundred and fifty participants belonging to different ethnic groups and indigenous people have been involved

Findings were recorded
RESULTS

Case Scenarios

• Mr. Oghei was diagnosed with hepatitis C and complications of liver disease in 2013, he died few months after precisely November, 2014. In 2015, his widow, Mary, died of same course, on her daughter’s wedding day.

• TWENTY- NINE year-old Obie was battling with feverish conditions, headaches and body aches for sometime. He was treated for malaria but no improvement, Obie died two months later of liver damage caused by hepatitis infection.
RESULTS...

- TWENTY-seven year-old Yaang died in 2016. In less than six months, his two brothers, 30 year-old and twenty-five were diagnosed with viral hepatitis B and now critically ill, with no finances to access medical care.

- Their poor mother languishes in pain, helplessly watching her children go, one after the other from a preventable disease. Right now, we are trying to raise fund for them to seek comprehensive medical treatment.
RESULTS....

• What do we say of little Tony, a boy of seven with severe hepatic pathology emanating from viral hepatitis, whose mother has lost a son previously to hepatitis?

• Thirty-year old Oko was diagnosed with HCV genotype 2 after doing menial jobs to raise money for diagnosis, for one and half years. Right now he cannot access care due to high cost of drugs. His condition is worsening.
INDIGENOUS SETTINGS
DISCUSSION

In indigenous agrarian communities;
- Loss of manpower results in increase in poverty because family breadwinners are infected and weak
- Death from viral hepatitis on the rise in developing nations requiring urgent intervention
- Do we wait for viral hepatitis to finish us, neglecting hepatitis endemic areas endangers the globe
WAY FORWARD

- Challenges as politics and insensitivity in care, high costs of antivirals, antiviral failure and resistance, high genetic diversity in HCV, lack of vaccine for HCV must be addressed

- Continue advocacy by civil societies, organizations and human right activists on improving access to care. Family members of infected persons must be educated on transmission routes

- Increased awareness on viral hepatitis, accessing care and eradication of unhealthy cultural practices

- Engagement of indigenous populations in decision making and policies that concern their health
Know your status
Get Tested-Learn your options

WORLD
HEPATITIS DAY 2017
July 28

ELIMINATE HEPATITIS

NOhep

Awareness Created by:
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WHAT IS HEPATITIS?

It is an inflammation of the liver, most commonly caused by a viral infection. Hepatitis is the infection of the liver, more contagious than HIV. More than 400 million people around the world are living with hepatitis B or C.

TYPES OF HEPATITIS CAUSED BY VIRUSES
These include Hepatitis A, B, C, D, E, G and X. X is hepatitis of unknown virus. Most liver damage is caused by hepatitis B and C. However, hepatitis can also be caused by alcohol and other toxins and infections as well as autoimmune processes.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS
At the acute stage, symptoms include mild flu, diarrhea, fatigue, loss of appetite, mild fever, muscle and joint aches, nausea, slight abdominal pain, vomiting, weight loss.
As the disease progresses into chronic stage, dark urine, dizziness, itchy skin and jaundice etc begin to set in.

TRANSMISSION OF HEPATITIS B VIRUS
- Sexual intercourse with infected person (STD/STI);
- Blood transfusion with infected blood;
- Skin perforation with unsterilized needles;
- Breast milk of an infected mother to baby;
- Bite by infected person.
Hepatitis B exists in all bodily fluid-saliva, blood, sweat, semen etc. Vaccine and treatment are available.

TRANSMISSION OF HEPATITIS C VIRUS
- Sexual intercourse with infected person (STD/STI);
- Piercing with infected blood.
Hepatitis C does not exist in saliva, blood, sweat, semen etc. Vaccine and treatment are available.
CONCLUSION

• Global efforts on increased screening, access to care and prevention needed to eliminate viral hepatitis

• Together we can defeat viral hepatitis
REFERENCES


Gao (2011). BMC Infectious Diseases, 11:88

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ATTENTION!!!