

# BACTERIOLOGY AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

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## IMPACT OF HEALTH EDUCATION INTERVENTION ON HIV/AIDS HIGH RISK GROUPS: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY IN NORTHERN INDIA

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**Background:** The sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevalence is estimated to be 6% in India. The emergence of HIV and identification of STIs as a cofactor have further lent a sense of urgency for formulating a programmatic response to address this problem.

**Aim of the Study:** The present study was carried out to assess the impact of health education intervention on HIV/AIDS high risk groups.

**Methods:** Field visits were made in 2013 and 2014. Interactive health education sessions were held with the high risk groups (Female sex workers and intra venous drug users) to know their knowledge about HIV/AIDS and practice of using condoms during sex. Total of 100 high risk group persons (50 FSW and 50 IVDU) were included in the study.

**Results:** During visit undertaken in 2013, correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS transmission was found in 60.2% of FSW and 25.0% in IV drug users. 56.3% of FSW used condoms during sex with the partners. None of the subjects in both the category knew their HIV status as they did not undergo any test for HIV/AIDS. Correct health education was given to the high risk participants. In 2014, there was marked improvement in their knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS. Correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS transmission was found in 78.3% of FSW and 44.0% in IV drug users. 76.4% of FSW used condoms during sex with the partners.

**Conclusions:** HIV remains a social and life-threatening disease and needs socio-cultural, pragmatic and inclusive preventive services. Stigma against HIV/AIDS should be removed through counseling and Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities.

## BIOGRAPHY

M Athar Ansari after completing Doctor of Medicine course in Community Medicine in 1998, he joined the faculty in the Department of Community Medicine, JN Medical College in 1999. He has been awarded PhD in Community Medicine in 2016. He is teaching undergraduate and postgraduate medical students and also involved in the training of medical interns in rural health programmes. He is also involved in the research activities directed towards micronutrient deficiencies, HIV/AIDS, disaster management and environmental health issues. He has got 110 papers published. He has presented papers in eight international conferences at Singapore, Bangkok, Colombo, Dhaka, Madrid and Paris and 120 papers in national/state conferences. He is working with high-risk groups for HIV/AIDS. He is also helping children suffering from eye problems with support from Kids with Vision, USA. He is also working in the field of nuclear disarmament in the country under the banner of Indian Institute of Peace, Disarmament and Environmental Protection (IIPDEP), Nagpur, India and International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), a Nobel Peace Prize Winner organization. He has been Coordinator/Principal Investigator/Co-investigator/Supervisor of various prestigious projects of different agencies like UNICEF, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, World Learning of USA, Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. (NPCIL), Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India. He is a life member of various public health organizations. He has authored eight books on public health issues. He is a Co-patron of Medics, an umbrella organization of medical doctors and university students working for the poorest of the poor sections of the society in Aligarh and across India.

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