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Substance Use Screening Among Youth with HIV in Integrated Care Settings

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INTRODUCTION

Substance use screening of YLWH in integrated care settings can guide prevention and treatment planning.

- Substance use concerns are well documented among youth living with HIV (YLWH).
- Not only is substance use a risk factor for contracting HIV among youth, but substance use can complicate HIV treatment given its impact on adherence and potential drug interactions.

Purpose of Study



- To examine the rate of substance use among YLWH in an integrated care setting.

Participants and Procedures

- This study used de-identified substance screening data collected as part of the standard protocol of care from January to December 2019 in an integrated care pediatric and adolescent HIV clinic in the southeastern United States.
- Complete data were available for 129 YLWH aged 12-25.
- Given the use of existing program evaluation data, this study was exempt from Institutional Review Board approval.

Measures

- Demographic data included age, gender, race, ethnicity, and mode of HIV transmission.
- Substance use screening instruments
 - CRAFFT
 - Brief Screener for Tobacco, Alcohol, and other Drugs-Revised (BSTAD-R)

Data Analysis

- Data were analyzed based on an archival review of patient records.
- Descriptive statistics were used to characterize the sample, scores on the CRAFFT and BSTAD-R, and referral data.

Participant Demographics

- Youth ranged in age from 12-25 ($M=20.05$, $SD=2.88$)

Participants were:

- Male ($N = 68$, 53.5%), Female ($N = 55$, 43.3%), Transgender Female ($N = 4$, 3.2%)
- Black ($N = 77$, 63.1%), White ($N = 37$, 30.3%), Asian ($N = 7$, 5.7%), and Other Race ($N = 1$, 0.9%)
- Non-Hispanic ($N = 97$, 78.2%), Hispanic ($N = 27$, 21.8%)
- 53.2% acquired HIV behaviorally, 46.8% perinatally

Substance Use Screening

Among 127 youth administered the CRAFFT

- 35.4% screened positive
- A referral was made for follow up after patient consultation for 10% of youth who screened positive on the CRAFFT

Age differences

- Youth aged 18-25 screened positive across measures with greater frequency than youth aged 12-17

Differences based on mode of transmission

- Youth who acquired HIV behaviorally screened positive with greater frequency than those who acquired HIV perinatally

Among the 57 youth administered the BSTAD-R

- 22.8% screened positive for tobacco use
- 42.1% screened positive for alcohol or other drugs
- Marijuana use was most commonly reported followed by alcohol use
- A referral was made for follow up after patient consultation for 22.8% of youth who screened positive on the BSTAD-R

Discussion



- Marijuana, alcohol, and tobacco were reported to be the substances used most frequently by YLWH, consistent with other nationwide studies (Earnshaw, 2020).
- Substance use among YLWH can impede the ability to negotiate safer sex practices (Arrington-Sanders et al, 2019).
- Patients who declined referrals frequently stated their use was social, illuminating the need for practitioners to address misperceptions of social norms which can lead to increased substance use (Amialchuk, Ajilore, & Egan, 2019).
- Limitations include a relatively small sample size and the fact data drew from one clinic in the southeastern US, which may affect generalizability.
- Despite limitations, findings have important implications for healthcare providers working with YLWH with regard to substance use prevention, screening, intervention, and treatment planning.

References available upon request.

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