

Abstract

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Community acceptance of male medical circumcision (MMC): a 2009 clustered cross-sectional pre- and post sensitization knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs (KAB) survey conducted in rural Uganda

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Background: The circumcision rate in Uganda (25%) remains one of the lowest in sub-Saharan Africa. The KAB instrument surveyed community acceptance of MMC as a HIV prevention tool before and after sensitization between February and July 2009.

Methods: Two cohorts of 315 male and female community members aged ≥ 15 years residing in two Kayunga, Uganda sub-counties participated. Sensitization activities included: meetings with religious-political-opinion leaders, twelve weeks of village-level drama presentations, a centrally placed billboard, two national radio talk/phone-in shows, market-place loud-speaker announcements, and a MMC program launch that received international attention. Surveys were entered into an excel spreadsheet, cleaned, and results were compared using SAS®. Descriptive, chi-square and KAB weighted analyses were conducted.

Results: Median age in both surveys was comparable (30 vs. 28 years). There were no differences between gender, religion, or number of men circumcised between cohorts (X^2 , $p=0.20$, $p=0.54$, and $p=0.35$ respectively). A large increase in knowledge that Kayunga District Hospital was offering free circumcision between the surveys was observed (42.2% vs. 81.6%, $p < 0.0001$), an increase in the number of men wanting to be circumcised ($p=0.02$), knowledge that circumcision reduces the risk of HIV infection ($p=0.0004$), and that participants would want their son to be circumcised ($p=0.02$). However, there were no significant differences between the pre and post survey in the knowledge for the definition of male circumcision (NSS, 95.5% and 88.0%, respectively) and females who indicated that they would not want their husbands circumcised (NSS, 92.9% and 93.5%, respectively).

Conclusions: Targeted MMC sensitization activities increased the level of community awareness about important MMC messages that should be disseminated before MMC services commence. Pre-post surveys can inform programs where more messaging is needed.