

Abstract 9: Significant decrease in the proportion of HIV-positive virally unsuppressed over the last 5 years in Mbongolwane and Eshowe sub-district, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Authors:

Nolwenn Conan, Erica Simons, Liesbet Ohler, Maphalala Thembelihle, Linda Dlamini, Amir Shroufi, Gilles van Cutsem, Menard L. Chihana, Helena Huerga

Background:

Since 2012, Médecins sans Frontières has supported the Department of Health in the sub-district of Mbongolwane and Eshowe, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, with extended community HIV testing and ART adherence counselling. In 2016, the country adopted universal antiretroviral therapy (ART) initiation regardless of CD4 count ("Treat all"). We evaluated changes in the HIV cascade of care coverage at population level by comparing data from two household surveys conducted in 2013 and 2018 in the sub-district.

Methods:

Cross-sectional population-based surveys. We used a multistage cluster sampling to identify the households visited. Individuals aged 15-59 years living in selected households who consented to participate were interviewed and tested for HIV at home. All HIV positive participants had their viral load (VL) measured regardless of their ART status.

Results:

In total 5,649 and 3,278 individuals were included in the surveys conducted in 2013 and 2018 respectively. Overall achievement of the 90-90-90 target was 76.4/69.9/93.1 in 2013 compared to 89.7/93.5/94.4 in 2018. Among women, HIV status awareness (first 90) was 79.0% (95%CI: 76.4- 81.4) in 2013 vs 91.9% (95%CI: 89.6- 93.8) in 2018 and ART coverage (second 90) was 70.5% (95%CI: 67.7- 73.2) in 2013 vs 95.5% (95%CI: 93.5- 96.9) in 2018. Among men, first 90 was 68.3% (95%CI: 63.1- 73.1) in 2013 vs 82.5% (95%CI: 76.7- 87.1) in 2018 and second 90 was 67.9% (95%CI: 60.8- 74.2) in 2013 vs 86.4% (95%CI: 80.3- 90.8) in 2018. In total 42.9% (599/1,395) of all HIV positive participants had a VL \geq 1,000 copies/ml in 2013 compared to 16.1% (133/827) in 2018.

Conclusion:

The 90-90-90 targets were achieved at sub district level. HIV positive status awareness and ART coverage significantly improved overall and among men and women. We found a very important decrease of people with VL \geq 1,000 copies/ml among HIV-positive.