

Public awareness about HIV/AIDS

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Introduction

These days HIV/AIDS is being spread all over the world. Each person may face this disease: from a child to a senior, from a factory worker to a president. The biology and transmission of the disease can affect life both individuals and social communities. In our country the total number of HIV infections in a 15-49 year age group (adolescents and adults) is 22016 people on the 1th of September, 2017. So we've decided to question people about HIV/AIDS to understand if the population of Belarus is informed well.

Aim of the study

To find out the awareness of Belarusian citizens about HIV / AIDS epidemiology, methods of treatment, and measures of prevention; to assess the quality of educational activities on the issue.

Materials and methods

Medical and scientific sources including foreign literature and websites were explored. To find out the situation on this problem in our country the latest publications and statistical data of the Republic of Belarus were studied. The method of questionnaire was used to collect the data. The research involved 141 respondents among people of all ages, mainly students from BSMU and other universities were questioned. The questionnaire was made in Google forms and included 13 questions.

Results

The analysis of students' answers has shown the following results. Among all the respondents the majority were students from 19 to 23 years (about 45%) and schoolchildren - 14-18 years. Each question was rated at 1 point. Only 3 people out of 141 respondents (approximately 2%) got maximum points. 43 people (about 30.5%) had 4 points. The smallest score (one correct answer) was received by 7 people (about 5% of the respondents). According to the results of the survey the most difficult question was: "Can an HIV-infected child attend a kindergarten?" Only 19 out of 141 answered it correctly. The greatest number of correct answers was given to the questions: "Do HIV-infected parents always have sick children?" and "Is HIV treatment possible?" Almost 60% of respondents agreed that they are provided with the necessary information at educational institutions or work places.

Conclusion.

The study reveals a low level of knowledge about HIV/AIDS which is truly an issue of global significance. It may be an evidence of insufficient educational work at educational institutions as well as at workplaces in our Republic. A high rate of HIV/AIDS can be a serious social and economic challenges for communities in different countries. Infected people may be unable to do their daily work. From our point of view the government should carry out wide-ranging outreach and awareness-raising work to inform the public about HIV/AIDS prevention measures.