

Ugandan Service Provider Perspectives on the WHO Recommendation on Hormonal Contraceptives and HIV Risk

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By

**Lydia Mulwany-Mukombe- AVAC HIV Prevention Research Advocacy
Fellow**

Lillian Mworeko- Regional Coordinator ICW East Africa

Background

- The World Health Organization issued a Technical Statement on hormonal contraceptives and HIV risk in February 2012.
“Current data were not sufficiently conclusive to change the Medical Eligibility Criteria (MEC) on contraceptive use. It also contained a clarification recommending that, because of potential HIV risk, women using progesterone-only injectable contraception (Depo-provera) should be strongly advised to also use condoms or other prevention measures.”
- This advocacy work is designed to enlighten women with evidence that will aid their advocacy efforts for improved family planning and HIV prevention, and to generate and present the perspectives of women on key issues and next steps to the agencies and policy makers.

Methods

- Information gathered for purposes of “evidence-based advocacy”
- Women consultation and capacity building
- One on one interviews with service providers in non-governmental organizations (N= 4)
- Selection based on wide coverage both in the urban and rural areas of Uganda
- Focus on service provider knowledge of the WHO statement, how it had influenced their operations and any plans they had to implement the recommendations.

Findings

- All providers were aware of the WHO statement.
- New recommendation is interpreted as needing no change in approach; yet the clarification was put to communicate this need to change approach in service delivery.
- Not willing to communicate the potential risk to clients
- HIV screening not priority at service delivery

Conclusion & Recommendations

- HIV, FP, and maternal health are equally important and should be addressed simultaneously through integration efforts.
- Providers should give accurate information to women about available contraception methods so they can make informed FP and HIV prevention choices.
- Trainings to enhance integration should prepare providers to accurately address these concurrent needs while protecting patients' right to information.
- Increasing contraceptive method mix is key
- WHO should speed up its recent commitment to release the technical document and communication strategy that will guide policy and programmes.

Next steps

- Assess provider insights into method mix
- Develop advocacy strategy based on results,
- Build a broader coalition HIV prevention and issues; and
- Ongoing monitoring of WHO and other agency activities at an international level.



THANK YOU!