

Poster presentation

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Making Liberia an AIDS Free Nation

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from 2005 International Meeting of The Institute of Human Virology
Baltimore, USA, 29 August – 2 September 2005

Published: 8 December 2005

Retrovirology 2005, **2**(Suppl 1):P106 doi:10.1186/1742-4690-2-S1-P106

Background

From continuous testing of admitted patients it has been emphatically stated by the Liberian National AIDS Control (LNACP) that the rate of infection on our growing population in term of those infected with the virus are increasing immensely. Many people do not really believe that AIDS is real. People are dying ignorantly from the virus. Other people just believe that something just have to kill someone. In the year 2004 the rate of infection was estimated to be 11–12 % of the approximately 3 million people in Liberia. By this time we are optimistic that there is an increase in the infection rate which is basically caused by the high rate of illiteracy, the influx of more foreigners or aliens on peace mission and business purposes, the high rate of poverty (80–90%) also cause by the high rate of unemployment leaving many people vulnerable to the virus.

Methods

A team of awareness on AIDS education took the city of Monrovia and its surroundings, congregating students from various high schools between the ages of 12–20 explicating the danger and prevention of AIDS from poster prints, tracts, and handouts for better understanding. Audio visual aids were actually needed to authenticate the information provided, but none was available. Questionnaires were distributed to evaluate their comprehensions and for statistical purpose.

Results

Of the total number of students 55% of them now believe that AIDS is real whilst 35% believe AIDS does not exist; on the other hand 10% believe that abstinence is the best method of prevention.

Conclusion

Peer education-one on one and one on group methods of awareness, engaging and structuring the press, promoting human rights, engaging journalists to produce quantities of quality articles, raising awareness among policy makers, high level government officials and the public in general are invaluable asset in combating HIV/AIDS. Capacity building workshops and conferences are most needed among the various tribes in worship centers. If these are considered and fully supported by international AIDS groups working in collaboration with local based groups Liberia will be a success story.