HIV testing in medical Patients: Why are we failing to meet guidelines?

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Introduction

Background

HIV is...

Common. In 2010, it was estimated that 99,000 people in the UK have HIV

Treatable. A late diagnosis is associated with increased morbidity and mortality

Under-diagnosed. One third of cases remain undiagnosed

Missed as a diagnosis. Research has shown that many 'late' presenters have recently been seen by healthcare professionals and the diagnosis had been missed.

Guidelines

The National Guidelines for HIV testing were produced in 2008. It has been recommended that the following patient groups should be offered an HIV test on admission to hospital.

• If a patient presents with a clinical indicator condition (see below)
• All patients with a diagnosis of TB, hepatitis B or C or lymphoma
• All patients who are from countries of high HIV prevalence
• If the prevalence of HIV in the local area is > 2/1000
• All men who have sex with men
• Patients who report a history of IVDU usage

Aims

To assess compliance with the national HIV testing guidelines within our Trust

To establish the attitudes towards and knowledge of HIV amongst doctors on the acute medical admissions team.

Method

A case-note review of 200 acute medical patients admitted in 2011 was conducted, to determine if national guidelines for HIV testing had been followed. The case notes were identified by a random list generated by the IT team

We also devised a questionnaire based on the guidelines to assess experience and knowledge of HIV medicine. The questionnaire was completed by 50 doctors across all grades working in acute medicine at a district general hospital in Surrey.

Results

1. Patients admitted from high HIV prevalence area

Guidelines – >95% patients to be offered an HIV test

Achieved 1%

2. Patients admitted from low HIV prevalence area

Guidelines – patient to be offered an HIV test if a clinical indicator condition or risk factor present

1% of patients had a known diagnosis of HIV and were on HIV treatment.

3% of patients were appropriately offered an HIV test

14% should have been offered an HIV test.

2% were known IVDU

12% had a clinical indicator condition

3. No patients were asked HIV risk factors

A Doctor survey of Knowledge and attitudes towards HIV medicine

Knowledge

On average, doctors could name 3.48 clinical indicator conditions out of 38.

Attitudes

68% were confident asking about HIV risk factors

74% were confident consenting for HIV testing

However 88% felt that they needed further training in HIV medicine.

Conclusion

Do not comply with national guidelines for HIV testing

Although doctors report confidence in some areas of HIV investigation, knowledge of clinical indicator conditions is poor.

Doctors of all grades would like further training in HIV medicine

These results were generated from a DGH and are likely to reflect testing and knowledge nationally

References


2. http://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/resources/concise-guidelines-testing-hiv


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Do Doctors feel they have sufficient knowledge of HIV?

Who completed survey