

Report on Cervical Cancer Awareness and Screening Campaign



Cervical Cancer Awareness and Screening Campaign that was organized by Lamu County Government Health department, Cervical Health Network, WWF and PS Kenya at Faza Sub County Hospital in Lamu East Constituency and at Witu model health center on 1st and 4th of February, 2018.

The exercise was targeting women between the ages of 18 to 60 where pregnant women and children below the age of 18 were not screened.

A four day in-reach was conducted where 213 women were screened for cervical cancer using visual inspection with acetic acid(VIA) visual inspection with lugol's iodine (VILI) method .The average age of the women screened was aged 36 years, the youngest being aged 18 years and the oldest 70 years of age.

Out of 213women screened, 7 were VIA/VILI positive giving an overall positivity rate 3.3%. The positive VIA/VILI cases were 4<25 years of age and 3<35 years of age.

Faza had the highest positivity rate 3(4.4%) compared to Witu 492.8%). Cryotherapy treatment was performed on 4(1.9%) women. Several women screened had infections, cervicitis being the most common infection 15%. Faza had the highest cervicitis infection rate 22.1% compared to Witu 11.7%. Fungal infection rate was 8.8 in Faza and 7.6% in Witu.

Urinary tract infection (UTI) was 5.9% in Faza and 6.9% in Witu, other pelvic inflammatory diseases (PID) was 2.9% in Faza and 7.6% in Witu.

Generally, Faza had a higher infection rate than Witu. Those who presented with infection were treated. Two women screened had large lesions and were referred for further investigation and management; while two could not have cryotherapy done because gas ran out.

The clients were however linked to the respective health facility for follow up on treatment.

One woman was referred for further breast investigation. Intrauterine devices (IUDs) were removed and depo Provera injection (Depo) as a family planning method was given to those who requested.

Strengths

- Community good will

Challenges

1. Inadequate commodities and skilled cryotherapists to enable routine screening for cervical cancer
2. Lack of community awareness of risk factors and symptoms of cervical cancer
3. High prevalence rate of cervicitis in Faza.

Recommendations

1. Commit adequate resources for prevention and early detection by increasing health budgets allocation as well as training interested staff on cryotherapy treatment.

2. Invest in raising awareness by conducting periodic health talks on cervical cancer.
3. Uniting around common goals and aspirations, can leverage the complementary skills, knowledge and spheres of influence of each partner to increase investment in cancer prevention measures, to address inequities in access to quality affordable cancer treatment and care and reduce premature deaths from the disease.
4. Going by the results of the in-reach, we recommend further and regular screening of women from Faza and its environs.

Conclusion

Cancer is a disease that knows no boundaries and has, or will affect us all either directly or indirectly during our lifetime. Knowing about signs and symptoms of cervical cancer and early detection enables finding cancer early which makes it often easier to treat. Committing adequate resources for cancer prevention is the first step to reducing cancer deaths. We can all do our part i.e. organizations, communities and individuals to break the silence.