

International Conference on **Retroviruses & Novel Drugs**

June 08-09, 2015 Chicago, USA

Knowledge on mother to child transmission and utilization of services designed to prevent mother to child transmission of HIV/AIDS among pregnant women in Hossana town, Southern Ethiopia

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Background: Everyday, more than 1,800 babies' worldwide contracted with HIV from their mothers. Many of these cases occur in Africa including Ethiopia. The transmission of HIV from infected mothers to babies could occur during pregnancy, delivery and breastfeeding. For women to take advantage of measures to reduce transmission, they need to know about Mother to Child Transmission (MTCT) of HIV and their HIV status. The aim of this study was to assess the knowledge on MTCT and utilization of services designed for Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) of HIV/AIDS among pregnant women.

Methods: Community based cross-sectional study was conducted at Hossana town from March 3-28, 2014 using pre-tested questionnaire and structured interviews. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 16. Descriptive statistics and logistic regression analysis were done.

Result: Out of the 417 pregnant women interviewed, 370 (88.7%) responded that they know MTCT of HIV, 377(90.4%) mothers tested for HIV during current pregnancy and 354(93.9%) shared test result to their husband. Few, 23(6.1%) did not disclose test result due to fear of divorce. The main reason for HIV testing, according to this study is to know self-status. Knowledge of Mother to child transmission was the independent predictor of utilization of the services rendered for PMTCT of HIV/AIDS.

Conclusions: More than three-fourth of pregnant women knew about MTCT of HIV. Nine women in every ten tested for HIV during current pregnancy and shared test result to their husband. Knowledge of mother to child transmission of HIV/AIDS was the independent predictor of utilization of PMTCT services. Thus, improving awareness of pregnant women about MTCT of HIV/AIDS and its prevention strategies by means of health care providers in maternal and child health service units should be strengthened.

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