

12th International Conference on
HEMATOLOGY AND HEMATOLOGICAL ONCOLOGY
&
6th International Conference on **HIV/AIDS, STDs AND STIs**
October 29-30, 2018 | San Francisco, USA

Community engagement in HIV vaccine research as a treatment strategy among men who have sex with men

Kelvin Owange Otieno
Community Healthcare Consultant, Kenya

Introduction: One of the challenges HIV vaccine researchers face is the grapple with the practical need to recruit, engage and sustain the research participants in the HIV vaccine trials and a broader social good regarding the safety of the participants and community perception on clinical research. Understanding the disjunction between the study concepts and participants level of clinical research literacy will pave the way for a successful HIV vaccine research. A meaningful and extensive engagement of the community is not only dependent on how researchers address the challenges associated with the participants' protection and involvement but also their engagement in the research process. Community engagement on HIV vaccine unearths salient implication of the research, with the potential to inform HIV prevention and treatment policy frameworks.

Purpose: This study aimed to identify how the meaningful community engagement in HIV vaccine research affects the vaccine trial outcomes among the MSM in Kenya.

Methodology: The study was qualitative. Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) researchers were engaged as key informants. The MSM, who are volunteers to the trials, also responded to questionnaires.

Findings: The study established that men who have sex with men (MSM) and those living with HIV in particular, face rampant discrimination and high levels of social stigma. For a long time, such situations compounded the challenges of the disclosure which have significant effects on their participation in the HIV vaccine trials. However, there was a gradual realization of some change in perception among the trial participants after research literacy training by the KEMRI.

Conclusion and Significance: Research on HIV vaccine is, therefore, an investment whose benefits transcends a promise of prevention and should uphold community engagement strategies. In Kenya, the vaccine science contributes to an array of research-driven discoveries.

kelvinwange@gmail.com