

Contemporary Issues in Women Cancers & Gynecologic Oncology

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Knowledge and attitude towards cervical cancer screening among first year female students in the Howard College Campus at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2015

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Cervical cancer continues to be a major cause of morbidity and mortality among women in the developing world. It is currently the second most commonly reported cancer among women in South Africa. Approximately one in every 26 South African women will develop cervical cancer during their lifetime. Organized cytology-based screening programs using Papanicolaou smear testing continues to be the single most effective tool in reducing deaths due to cervical cancer. Despite the creation of a national cervical cancer screening program, findings have shown low level of knowledge of cervical cancer and screening methods among university female students in South Africa. This study presents the assessment of the level of knowledge of cervical cancer screening among first year female students on the Howard College Campus (HCC) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN); to determine their attitudes towards cervical cancer screening and; to examine the factors influencing their knowledge and attitude towards cervical screening. An observational cross-sectional study design with both descriptive and analytic components was implemented. The study was conducted on the HCC at the UKZN. A proportional stratified random sampling technique was used to select 244 first year female students aged 18 to 25 years. Data was collected using a standardized structured self-administered questionnaire. The data was analyzed using descriptive and analytic statistics. The results show fairly good level of awareness of cervical cancer (75.4%) and cervical cancer screening method (Pap smear) (70.9%). However, knowledge of cervical cancer risk factors, symptoms, screening methods and treatment was poor.

Biography

Oluwatosin Rotimi is currently a PhD (Public health) student at University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. She qualified as a Medical Doctor at Ladok Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso, Nigeria where she obtained her Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS). She received a Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Health from the University of Pretoria, South Africa and Postgraduate Diploma in HIV Management from Stellenbosch University, South Africa. She obtained her Master's Degree in Public Health at University of KwaZulu-Natal. She has worked extensively in Medical Research and practiced as a Medical Doctor. Her research interests are Cervical Cancer, Cervical Cancer Screening, HIV and Infectious Diseases.

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