



Iatrogenic transmission of HIV - Unsafe reuse of needles and syringes in Pakistan - a public health crisis



Date & time

Sunday July 31st, 2022 at 8:00 PM
Pakistan time (11:00 AM US Eastern Time)

Host



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Speaker



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Moderators



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Panelists



Dr. Najam Zaidi

MD, FACP, FIDSA
Clinical Infectious Diseases Consultant,
Director of Antimicrobial Stewardship,
and Chair Infection Prevention.
Morton Hospital, (Steward Medical
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Prof. Dr. Bushra Jamil

Aga Khan University
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Pakistan (MMIDSP)

Registration Link: <http://bit.ly/merit-hiv>

In collaboration with

Brown University: Alpert Medical
School at Brown University,
Providence, RI



MMIDSP: Medical
Microbiology & Infectious Diseases
Society of Pakistan



Pakistan Society of Internal
Medicine



APPNE: Association of Pakistani
Physicians of New England



Prov/Bos CFAR:
Providence-Boston Center for
AIDS Research



CMU: Common Management Unit,
HIV, TB, and Malaria, Government
of Pakistan



Webinar 13 – Iatrogenic Transmission of HIV – Unsafe Reuse of Needles and Syringes in Pakistan – A Public Health Crisis (Jul 31, 2022)

Summary:

HIV and Injection Safety in Pakistan

- Quarter of a million HIV-positive people (PLHIV)
 - Small percentage of them, less than 50,000, are aware of their HIV status,
 - Even less than that are receiving medicines for HIV (ART)
- Chronology of reported HIV outbreaks in Pakistan
 - 2003: In Larkana, 17 (9.7%) people who inject drugs (PWIDs) out of 175 were reported HIV positive
 - 2008: In Jalalpur Jattan, 53 HIV cases reported; Association with exposure to unsafe injections, dental procedures, and males visiting barber shops
 - 2016: Poor infection prevention and control and poor maintenance of dialysis machines were identified as the main cases behind 20 HIV infections
 - 2018: In Kot Imrana, near Sargodah, 35-40 cases identified: Investigation by Punjab Health Dept identified to unsafe injection practices as main cause.
 - 2019: In April 2019, in Ratodero, near Larkana, numerous children and mothers were suspected to have HIV and subsequent investigation confirmed 930 HIV positive cases, out of which 763 (82%) children. Investigation by WHO and FELTP linked the outbreak with unsafe injection practices
- Key Players in the HIV Prevention Response in Pakistan
 - Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation, and Coordination
 - National AIDS Control Programme
 - Management Unit (responsible for Global Fund-supported initiatives-UNDP)
 - Provincial AIDS Control Programmes
 - NGOs/CBOs
- Issues in Response to HIV Prevention
 - Lack of collaborative approaching to HIV prevention
 - Weak communication between administrative levels
 - HIV program lacks leadership
- Global Review of Injection Practices
 - Review of Demographic Health Surveys (DHS) from 2011-2015
 - Since 2011, 90 countries conducted DHS and data was available for 40
 - Injection frequency decreased from 3.8 to 1.6
 - 96.1% of countries used new injection devices
 - The annual number of unsafe injections was reduced by 81%
 - In Pakistan, unsafe injections did not decrease between 2006-2012
 - Despite limitations, the data provided some measure of progress over time
- Improving Unsafe Injection Practices

- o Empower the community to question the need for injection and the type of syringe
- o Institute the use of reuse prevention syringes (RUP) in the therapeutic sector
- o Conventional syringes which have multiple plunger movements are needed for re-constitutions of medicines and flushing the IV line
- Improving the HIV response
 - o The provincial governments need to increase spending
 - o Ensure that an HIV-positive patient gets integrated service at the ART Center: Treatment, Counseling, Testing, Adherence education, Condoms
 - o HIV-related stigma and discrimination, gender inequality, and the criminalization of Key populations are powerful barriers to HIV services

Injection Devices in Pakistan

- 1.5 billion plus/minus 300 million syringes are being used in Pakistan per year
- current capacity of manufacturing in Pakistan is less than 600 million.
 - o One of the biggest manufacturers is AMSON, with a capacity of 350 million, but are only able to make 250 million syringes. Their capacity is already sold until 2025
- UNICEF bulk purchases syringes from Pakistan, they are not guaranteed to be used in Pakistan
 - o UNICEF will decide where they will distribute these syringes based on where the need is
- Due to lowered production quantities, syringe reuse is anywhere from 17% to 50%
- Syringe Anatomy
 - o Therapeutic syringes have removable syringes; one can take the needle off, keep the plastic body and put a new needle on
 - o A plunger, which has a gasket on, the top, a barrel, and then the needle with a cap.
 - o Pakistan only manufactures plastic parts (not the gaskets or needles)
 - Even the plastic used in molding the syringe is imported
 - o Rough cost: PKR 22.5 to buy a box of 100
 - Physician must charge more to include drug cost and provider cost