

CHEMOPROPHYLAXIS FOR HIV PREVENTION IN PERUVIAN AND ECUADORIAN MEN

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, is one of several experimental prevention interventions (including microbicides and vaccines) which could potentially provide additional modes of minimizing the risk of HIV infection. The primary goal of this proposal is to conduct a randomized blinded clinical trial evaluating the safety and efficacy of chemoprophylactic therapy using once daily tenofovir 300 mg to prevent HIV-1 acquisition in high-risk uninfected men who have sex with men (MSM).

INTERESTING FINDINGS

During 2006 we implemented formative research as part of preparedness phase for the implementation of a PrEP trial using antiretrovirals (tenofovir/Truvada) in two countries of the Andean Region, Ecuador and Peru. We conducted 17 focus groups with different sub cultures of men who have sex with men that may potentially enroll in a PrEP study and 2 focus groups with participants of on-going trials. We also conducted and participated in two community consultations. We identified 15 major topics that were discussed, one of which was, information. This abstract summarizes the analysis of this topic.

Only focus group participants (no community consultation attendees) reported information concerns. Major areas of concern with regards to enrolment in a PrEP trial were:

- 1) Amount of blood drawn during procedure
- 2) Medication interactions with ARVs
- 3) Side effects/adverse events.

Recommendations included:

- 1) Very well trained staff (warm, empathetic, trustful and knowledgeable)
- 2) Provision of good information to the community (using media, public talks presentations at schools and informative and creative educational materials) in easily understandable way
- 3) Counselling support for enrolment decision-making

The MSM communities in Peru and Ecuador are willing to contribute to face the HIV/AIDS epidemic that is affecting them; however, the good, broad and easy to understand information is crucial to accepting enrolment in a clinical trial. This process helped the study team select the most adequate environments for the implementation of the study: Lima, Iquitos in Peru and Guayaquil in Ecuador. (excerpted from "*Communities advocate for themselves: good information is crucial for clinical trials participation in pre-exposure prophylaxis (PREP) studies*" presented at the International AIDS Society Conference, July 2007)

PROJECT END DATE: August 2009