Community Health Volunteers and their role in facilitating adoption of health interventions in the community.

Charity Hungu¹ Relebogile Mapuroma Jabulani Ncayiyana Martin Atela

¹University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

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Community health volunteers (CHVs) are lay members of a community who are chosen to deliver health interventions with support from the health system. They provide an important link between the government services and the community. The success of intervention activities is influenced by the role of the CHVs. This was a cross-sectional study which collected data from 75 CHVs through validated interviewer administered questionnaires and data was analysed using Stata v.14. The study was conducted in three counties: Kisumu, Siaya and Homa Bay in Western Kenya. The intervention activities included health education and drug distribution to community members. The aim of the study was to determine performance of CHVs to intervention guidelines. The CHVs comprised 75% females; 46% were above 45 years and 71% had completed secondary education. Sixty-eight per cent of CHVs reported that community members accepted to take drugs, while 51% reported that they had difficulty convincing community members to take the treatment. Fifty-three per cent respondents reported that they did health education once a year, while 47% did throughout the year. Health education was done in the community through various means including handing out flyers (47% CHVs), visiting participants door to door (81% CHVs) and hanging posters in the community (4% CHVs). Majority of the CHVs (75%) indicated that they visited all the households in their allocated list and 83% directly observed treatment. The study revealed that CHVs adhered to intervention guidelines as designed by program managers and achieved the program targets within the community. Directly observed treatment and waiting for side effects in community members should be encouraged by the program managers to ensure that all community members are taking the treatment. To allay fears of treatment, health education and awareness campaigns need to be conducted regularly to ensure acceptability of treatment by the community.

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