

Annual Congress & Medicare Expo on

Primary Healthcare

April 25-27, 2016 Dubai, UAE

A nutrition-sensitive approach to delay the progression of HIV to AIDS among people living with HIV (PLWH) in Nigeria

Abraham Mainaji Amlogu^{1,2}

¹University of Westminster, UK

²State House Medical Centre, Nigeria

In 2005, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported complex interaction between nutrition and HIV/AIDS. Evidence highlights that under-nutrition weakens the immune system and in people living with HIV (PLWHIV) in particular, this increases their susceptibility to AIDS. The aim of the study was to ascertain the nutrition-sensitivity approach through a tailored functional recipe designed to attenuate the progression of HIV to AIDS among people living with HIV in Nigeria. Local foods, known for their availability, accessibility, macro and micronutrient strengths were selected and optimized into a nutritional functional meal (Amtewa). 400 PLWHIV (adult males and females; average age 35 years \pm 5 SD) were recruited from HIV treatment centers in Abuja, through simple randomization process. The effect of daily consumption of Amtewa meal (354.92 kcal/100g/day) for 6 months was ascertained through the nutritional status indicator (mid upper arm circumference - MUAC) and biochemical indices (CD4 count) of the study participants who were/were not taking the intervention meal. After 6 months, the mean CD4 cell count (cell/mm³) for antiretroviral therapy (ART)-intervention group (n=200) increased by 12.12%. Mean-MUAC (cm) also increased by 2.52% within the same period. On the contrary, there were decreases in control groups (n=200) after 6 months of the study. Mean CD4 count decreased by 14.9% and mean-MUAC decreased by 2.28%. Moreover, Student's T-test analysis suggested a strong association and synergistic effect between the intervention meal and mean CD4 count in the group of participants on ART (p=0.05). These results ascertained the effectiveness of Amtewa meal on health status of HIV infected subjects and also underpinned its significant position within the National Health Services framework as innovative nutrition-sensitive approach to delay the progression of HIV to AIDS in Nigeria.

Biography

Abraham Mainaji Amlogu is a Consultant Clinical Pharmacist at the State House Medical Centre, Abuja, Nigeria. He holds a PhD in Public Health Nutrition from the University of Westminster, London. He is an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy in UK, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, a Fellow and an Examiner with the West Africa Postgraduate College of Pharmacists. He has published in a lot of international reputed journals and has been serving as an Editorial Board Member of the international *Journal of Functional Foods in Health and Diseases*.

amloguab@gmail.com
abraham.amlogu@my.westminster.ac.uk

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