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Perceived uptake of partner notification using a referral slip and acceptability of provider-initiated partner notification using short-text-messages among men in the taxi industry**Mathildah Mpata Mokgatle and Sphiwe Madiba**

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Studies revealed that most men in the transport industry including taxi drivers are most likely to engage in unsafe sexual practices predisposing them to sexually transmitted infections. They often practice unsafe sex such as engaging in casual sexual relations, sex in exchange for money and have multiple and concurrent sexual partners. A cross-sectional survey was conducted using anonymous structured self-administered questionnaires translated from English into a local language. A sample of n=722 male taxi drivers with the mean age of 37.2 years old, 76% were within the age range of 25-44 years of old participated in the study. Up to 94% had sexual relationships, 59.5% had multiple partners amongst which 45.6% reported having causal partners. Perceived uptake of partner notification using a referral slip to a sexual partner was 93.2% (n=670), receiving a referral slip from a sexual partner to uptake STI health services was 91.8% (n=659), perceived ease of delivering a referral slip to a sexual partner was 69.5%. The level of acceptability of partner notification using a short-message-system (SMS) from a health care provider was 62.7% (n=452). From n=109 participants who responded, the reasons given for the non-acceptability of using SMS for partner notification and referral, telling partner face to face (n=55), SMS is not reliable (n=47) and SMS could cause conflict in a relationship (n=7). The study show that perceived uptake of and ease of use of partner notification using referral slip as well as acceptability of provider-initiated partner notification by SMS were high.

Biography

Mathildah is an associate professor in the School of Public Health at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University. She is a public health specialist with 15 years of experience in postgraduate teaching across the various disciplines of public health. Her expertise lies in teaching quantitative research, health program evaluation, quantitative statistical analysis. She successfully graduate numerous students in the Master of Public, postgraduate diploma and public health doctoral program. Her research niche is in social aspects of HIV and AIDS with a focus on orphans and vulnerable children, adolescent sexual health and STI/HIV prevention and control.

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