Unmet Need for Family Planning Underestimated Among Women Living with HIV in Kenya

#1253

Alison L. Drake[1], Erica Wetzler[1], Aparna Seth[1], Agnes Karingo Karume[2], Nancy Ngumbau[2], Celestine Atieno[2]; June Moraa[2]; Jenna Udren[1], Barbra A. Richardson[1], Jennifer A. Unger[3], John Kinuthia[1,2]

[1]University of Washington, Seattle, WA, USA, [2]Kenyatta National Hospital, Nairobi, Kenya, [3]Brown University, Women and Infants Hospital, Providence, RI, USA

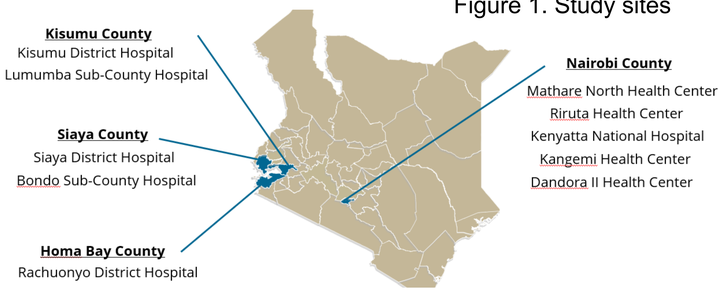
BACKGROUND

- **Unmet need for family planning (FP) measures gaps in FP access and use**
  - Also measures risk of vertical HIV transmission for women living with HIV (WLWH)
- Criteria to assess need for FP are used in FP/HIV integrated services to direct FP service delivery
- Applying the **World Health Organization (WHO) definition and criteria for need for FP may underestimate** true unmet need for WLWH.

METHODS

- Used baseline survey data from WLWH in an ongoing cluster randomized trial (Mobile WACh Empower) evaluating a digital reproductive health intervention (vs. standard of care)
- Women enrolled from 10 HIV care and treatment centers in Kenya (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Study sites



% Unmet need for FP calculated as:

 # Not using modern FP method & with need for FP
 # With need for FP

- Criteria use in the definition of for need for FP varied by requirements for sexual activity, regular partners, and desired timing of next pregnancy (Table 1)

Table 1. Criteria and definitions of need for FP

Definition	Criteria required		
	Desire for pregnancy	*Sexually active*	*Married/ regular partner*
WHO (Standard)	≥ 2 years	✓	✓
Delay pregnancy ≥1 year	***≥ 1 years***	✓	✓
Delay pregnancy ≥6 months	***≥ 6 months***	✓	✓
Delay pregnancy (any duration)	***Not now***	✓	✓
No requirement for sexual activity	≥ 2 years	✗	✓
No requirement for regular partner	≥ 2 years	✓	✗

Bold font indicates modification from WHO standard definition

OBJECTIVE: To compare estimates of unmet need for FP by applying different definitions of need for FP (vs the WHO definition)

- Using Poisson regression with robust standard errors, controlling for enrollment facility

RESULTS

Table 2. Characteristics of WLWH (n=3296)

Characteristics	N (%) or median (IQR)
Age (years)	33 (28-38)
Regular partner	2377 (72)
Married	1965 (60)
Sexually active with partner	2294 (74)
Currently sexually active	2416 (74)
Months since last sexual activity	2 (0.2-2)
With regular partner	0.2 (0.1-2)
Without regular partner	2 (2-24)
Fertility intentions	
Desire future pregnancy	1349 (41)
Planning pregnancy ≤ 2 years	297 (9)
Pregnancy ambivalent	628 (20)
Modern FP user	2700 (82)

Figure 2. Modern FP method mix among WLWH using modern FP

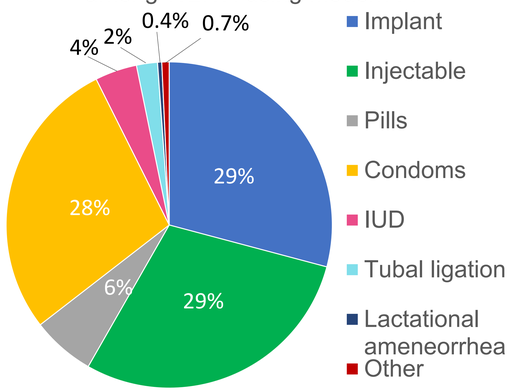


Figure 3: Unmet need for FP, by definitions/criteria for need for FP

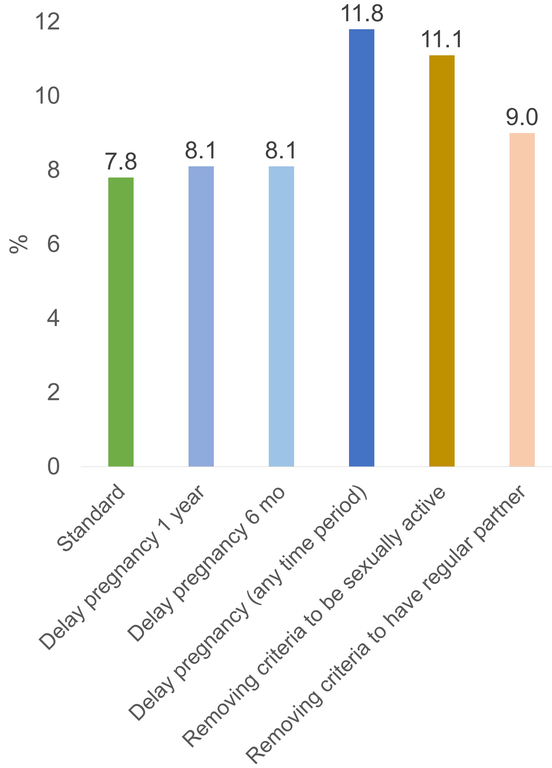


Table 3. Risk of being classified as having unmet need for FP, by definition

Definition	RR (95% CI)	p
WHO (Standard)	REF	-
Delay pregnancy 1 year	1.04 (0.81, 1.32)	0.78
Delay pregnancy 6 months	1.03 (0.81, 1.32)	0.78
Delay pregnancy (any duration)	*1.51 (1.21, 1.88)*	*<0.001*
No requirement for sexual activity	*1.42 (1.14, 1.77)*	*0.002*
No requirement for regular partner	1.15 (0.91, 1.45)	0.23

Unmet need for FP among WLWH may be underestimated by 1-4%
-This *translates to a 15-50% relative increase* in estimates of unmet need.

CONCLUSIONS

- Unmet need for FP among WLWH are sensitive to changes in requirements for sexual activity and timing of future pregnancy
- Removing requirements for sexual activity ≥2 years for the desired timing for a future pregnancy (i.e., no minimum duration) **increased estimates of unmet need by 42% and 51%, respectively**
- Potential misclassification of unmet need for FP suggests **there are missed opportunities to provide FP counseling services to WLWH who do not present as having a need for FP** using the standard WHO definition



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Author Contact: adrake2@uw.edu

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