

**ASSESSING QUALITY OF HIV COUNSELLING SERVICES OFFERED IN PUBLIC
HEALTH FACILITIES IN KAMPALA.**

KYOBUTUNGI VICTO

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MHSR

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Abstract

Introduction: HIV counselling has increasingly become available in public health facilities in Uganda. Counselling is a key component in HIV/AIDS prevention programs as an entry point into care, treatment and support services. This study assessed the quality of HIV counselling services offered in public health facilities in Kampala by reviewing adherence to the HCT policy guidelines, content of counselling information and amenities.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional study utilizing quantitative methods of data collection. The sample size constituted of 74 health workers offering HIV counselling services at five public health facilities were interviewed. The overall quality of HIV counselling was categorized as ‘poor’ if the final score was below 70% and ‘good’ if the score was above 70%. Likewise, for the three dimensions of quality, the same cut off of 70% was considered. Principal component analysis was utilized to obtain and reveal current composite scores of the variables. Data were summarized into frequencies and proportions using STATA, version 13.0.

Results: The study revealed that quality of HIV counselling at the five public health facilities was ‘poor’ as 74% of the health workers offered ‘poor’ quality HIV counseling and only one out of five health facilities was found to have adequate amenities. Majority (74.3%) of the health workers were found not to adhere to HCT guidelines. In addition, 67.6% of the health workers offered ‘poor’ content of counselling information.

Conclusion: Overall quality of HIV counselling was found to be poor. Improvements should be focused on mentorship programs for all health workers involved in HIV counselling. Provision of modest space for counselling is also required so as to ensure privacy during counselling sessions.