HPV Vaccination Intentions in Black Young Adults: Preliminary Data

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Background

Genital Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) that has been linked to cancer in women and men associated cervical cancers affect Black women more than other women (CDC, 2016). The population most affected by the HPV virus are individuals in their late teens and early 20s (CDC, 2017).

The incidence of HPV-related cancers can be eradicated by over 90%, with the proper utilization of the HPV vaccination (CDC, 2018). Research has shown that parents in the United States have concerns regarding vaccinations in general, and particularly the HPV vaccine. Therefore, many young men and women entering college have not received the HPV vaccination. College students can receive health care, such as vaccinations, without the necessity of parental consent. However, studies have shown that college students may not even be aware that there is an HPV vaccine, and that they should get vaccinated.

Methods

After IRB approval, a pilot was conducted. Male and female students recruited from a minority serving institution (MSI) in the southeastern United States from March 2019 to April 2019. Inclusion criteria for the study were age 18-24, enrollment as a student, the ability to read and write English, enrolled in the college of university, be HPV vaccine naïve, and have not previously participated in the study.

After verbal consent was obtained, participants completed a self-administered survey. The survey elicited data on demographics and seven questions related to the participants sexual experience.

Results

• The convenience sample included a total of 15 Black male (N=1) and female (N=14) students.
• 67% (n=10) reported being sexually active
• 20% (n=3) of participants had unprotected sex
• Ages ranged from 20-24.
• 87% (n=13) of the total sample do not plan to vaccinate

Implications

Health care providers must continue to educate this vulnerable population about HPV and the HPV vaccine. These efforts should focus on increasing administration of the HPV vaccine to the vaccine naïve college students.

Acknowledgments

This study is partially funded by The Nurses Charitable Trust Research Grant.