

## **Abstract**

The aim of the study was to estimate the utilization of prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV services (PMTCT) in Oyam district, identify factors influencing it and give recommendations for its improvement for the betterment of maternal and child health care in the district.

This was a cross-sectional study. The primary dataset had a sample size of 163 mothers aged 15 to 49 years who had delivered babies in Oyam district from January 2007 to December 2008. The secondary data set (health facilities data) consisted of records of 11,362 mothers who had attended ANC from the two main health facilities (Anyeke HCIV and Aber Hospital) in Oyam district. Key informant interviews with midwives in Maternity units were conducted.

Results: Uptake of HIV testing for PMTCT was 75%. Prevalence of HIV among ANC mothers was 5%. Only 24% of HIV positive mothers had accessed the recommended combination of ARVs regimens for PMTCT, and only 15% started on highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART). Only 9% of the 180 HIV exposed babies received the recommended combination of AZT and NVP syrups. Only 46% of the 388 HIV positive mothers delivered at health facilities. Forty-six percent of the mothers did not know the importance of ARVs in PMTCT. Though first ANC attendance was 92%, only 39% delivered at health facilities. Significant associations were found between distance to nearest ANC/PMTCT site and lack of financial support for ANC; acceptance of HIV testing for PMTCT with being married, and having higher levels of education; deliveries from home and lack of financial support, long distances, and low educational levels. Lack of financial support was dominant over near distance to health facility, especially in home deliveries.

Conclusion: The study concluded that the uptake of the more efficacious PMTCT services packages is insufficient in Oyam district. Successful utilization of PMTCT services in Oyam district would need bringing ANC/PMTCT and delivery services nearer to people, repackaging PMTCT messages into simpler easier to understand formats, and the promotion of girl child education. Above all, an improvement in the average household income levels of the people of the district is mandatory.