

Effect of quality improvement initiative on viral load re-suppression of children and adolescents living with HIV: The case of Kolfe Keraniyo sub-city in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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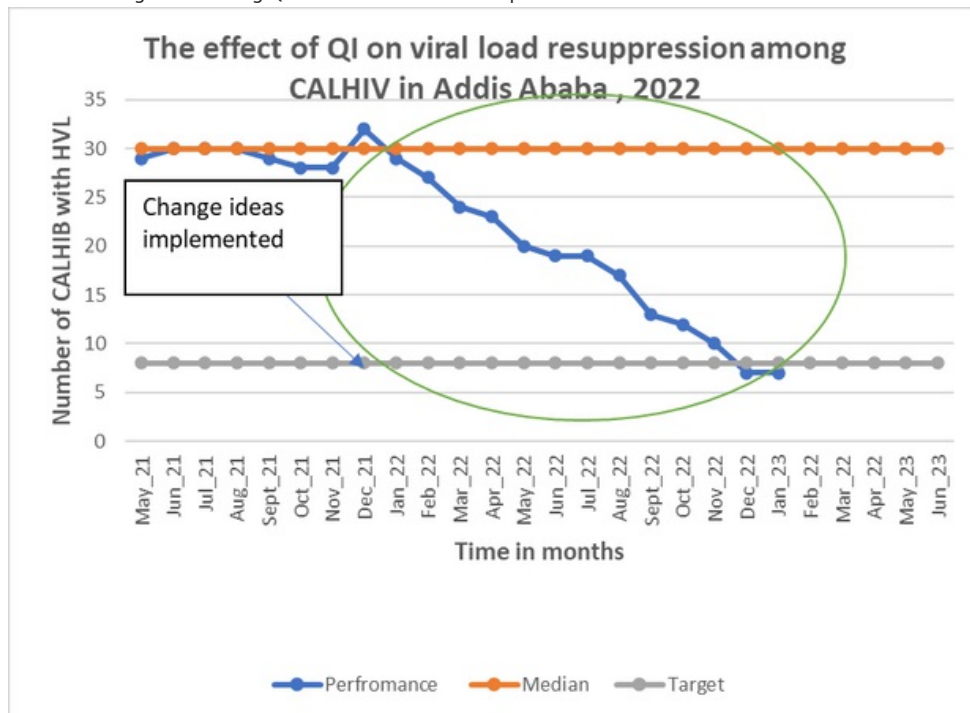
Country of research: Ethiopia

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Background: In low- and middle-income countries, virological non-suppression among children and adolescent living with HIV (CALHIV) continues to be the major causes in treatment failure and mortality. Antiretroviral therapy adherence and the underlying virological suppression are both impacted by behavioral and mental health issues, however data in developing countries is limited. The aim of the study was to evaluate HIV the effect of quality improvement (QI) on virological suppression in Kolfe Keraniyo sub-city, Addis Ababa among adolescents and children living with HIV.

Methods: One QI initiative designed to improve viral load re-suppression of adolescents and children living with HIV was purposefully selected. There were 32 adolescents and children with high viral load as a baseline put under this QI initiative in January 2022. These CALHIV were followed for 10 months and the trends of viral load re-suppression (less than 50 copies/ml) were evaluated using run in uninterrupted time series

Results: During the implementation period, the number of CALHIV with high viral load decreased from 32 to 8 showing that the QI initiative improved viral load re-suppression of 24(75%) CALHIV from January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2022. As the graph below shows, there appeared 12 consecutive data points below the median indicating the presence of a non-random signal: two of them lay below the target set by the QI initiative and the last data point ended up below the target indicating QI initiative had led to improvement



Conclusions: Quality improvement initiative was effective in improving viral load re-suppression among adolescents and children living with HIV. A quality improvement initiative embedded within clinical management has improved the viral load re-suppression in public health facilities in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Thus, using local innovative ideas such as QI initiatives, we can bring changes that can be scaled up at a national level

Ethical research declaration: Yes

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