

HIV in Ecuador: A Current Perspective of the Epidemics from a Major HIV Care Center

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BACKGROUND

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection is estimated to affect 36.7 million people (persons living with HIV [PLWH]). In Latin America and Caribbean exist around 2 million of PLWH. Ecuador estimates are close to 35.000 PLWH with prevalence of 3 cases per 1000 population, being 31.4% woman.

Since the first case of HIV reported in the country in 1983 the efforts have been made to improve prevention and treatment of the disease being epidemiology paramount in planning. Herein we present a current panorama of HIV in Ecuador from a major center serving approximately 2 million people in the coastal zone.

OBJECTIVES

1. Clarify the demographics and clinical features of patients with HIV in a major HIV care center for the coastal zone of the country.
2. Analyze the immunological status of the patients in the last year.
3. Evaluate the impact of treatments and its use on new and past patients.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Patients with diagnosis of HIV/AIDS (ICD-10 B24) from January to December 2015 were included from a database comprising 346.386 visits to outpatient clinics.

The variables we consider were demographics, newly versus previously diagnosed, type of antiretroviral regimen, AIDS-defining conditions, CD4 count and viral load. The statistical analysis was made on Microsoft Excel.

RESULTS

A total of 3776 HIV positive patients were found during the study period. Median age was 37±15, 37±15 for males and 38±15 for females (p>0.05). Male to female ratio was 4.72:1.

More than half patients (2588, 68.5%) were receiving antiretroviral therapy. The most common therapy used was tenofovir + emtricitabine + efavirenz, followed zidovudine + lamivudine + efavirenz for 472 (18.2%).

Most patients (91.97%) with HIV infection were not in AIDS stage. Newly diagnosed HIV was seen in 824 patients (21.82%), of which 59 (7%) were on AIDS stage at time of diagnosis. There was only 45 cases in this group (5.46%) with CD4 <200 cells/mm3 possibly suggesting rapid progression or advanced disease.

RESULTS

TABLE 1. MAIN RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS (N=3776)

DEMOGRAPHICS	
Age (IQR)	37±15
Males	82.6%
CD4 < 200 cells/mm3	202 (5.3%)
Viral load < 200 copies	2023 (53.5%)
AIDS phase	303 (8%)
Asymptomatic	3473 (91.9%)
PATIENTS USING ANTIRETROVIRAL	2588 (68.5%)
Tenofovir + Emtricitabine + Efavirenz	1787 (69%)
Zidovudine + Lamivudine + Efavirenz	472 (18.2%)
Tenofovir + Emtricitabine + Lopinavir + Ritonavir	164 (6.3%)
Zidovudine + Lamivudine + Lopinavir + Ritonavir	165 (6.4%)
NEWLY DIAGNOSED PATIENTS	824 (21.8%)
On AIDS phase	59 (7%)
Asymptomatic	765 (93%)
CD4 < 350 cell/mm3	126 (15.29%)

CONCLUSIONS

HIV infection is a public health concern in Ecuador affecting mostly young males. More than half patients are on antiretroviral therapy and most patients are not in AIDS stage. This study comprises a current view of the epidemiological situation of HIV/AIDS in the coast of Ecuador and allows for planning and further research.

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