

Factors Affecting Premarital Sickle Cell Screening Uptake Among Pregnant Women Attending Antenatal Clinic at Lira Regional Referral Hospital.

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Abstract

Background: Sickle cell disease (SCD) is affecting approximately 20-25 millions people globally (Zaidi et al., 2021). In Uganda, the prevalence of the sickle cell trait is 13.3%, and in Lira City, it stands at 19.2% (Dilli et al., 2024; Medical records Lira Regional Referral Hospital, et al., 2024).

Objective: To determine the level of uptake and factors affecting the premarital sickle cell screening among pregnant women aged 18 to 35 years attending antenatal clinic at Lira Regional Referral Hospital.

Methods: A hospital-based cross-sectional study was conducted among 170 pregnant women aged 18 to 35 years attending ANC at LRRH. Sample size was determined using the Kish-Leslie formula, 1965. Systematic random sampling was used to select study participants. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered via Kobo Collect after obtaining ethical approval from LUREC, and analysed using STATA version 18. Descriptive statistics, binary logistic regression were used at bivariate and multivariate level.

Results: Of the 170 respondents, only 14.7% had undergone premarital sickle cell screening. Uptake was significantly associated with having seen a PSCS-related poster (AOR = 7.71, 95% CI: 1.60–37.17) and having visited a health facility specifically for PSCS (AOR = 9.09, 95% CI: 15.54–54.22).

Conclusion: The uptake of Premarital Sickle Cell Screening (PSCS) was low at 14.7%, mainly due to limited awareness and poor health-seeking behavior. Exposure to PSCS posters and visits to health facilities were significantly associated with higher uptake. The study recommends increased sensitization and promotion of good health-seeking practices to improve screening rates.

Keywords: Premarital Sickle Cell Screening, Disease, Trait and Uptake.

