

Perception of women who attend health care services regarding cervical cancer screening at
Thulamela Municipality, Vhembe District, Limpopo Province

by

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ABSTRACT

Cervical cancer is said to be the most common cause of cancer deaths occurring among women living in developing countries. The disease is preventable and can even be cured if detected at an early stage. Many developed countries have been able to achieve significant reduction in mortality as a result of well organized, nationwide screening and treatment programmes. This study examined the perception of women regarding cervical cancer screening in Thulamela Municipality, Limpopo Province. Specific objectives were to determine factors perceived as barriers to cervical cancer screening by women, to determine women's perceived susceptibility to cervical cancer and to determine women's perceived benefits to cervical cancer screening

The study was quantitative in nature and adopted the cross sectional design. Clustering and simple random techniques were used to select a sample of 340 women from a population of 2246 women. Data was collected using a questionnaire, and analysed using SPSS version 19. Both descriptive and analytical statistics was used, and the results were presented in a form of graphs and tables. Chi-square tests were conducted to determine association between some characteristics of the sample. This study found that women perceived PAP test as the best way of detecting cervical cancer, but they did not perceive cervical cancer as a killer disease, however there was no indication whether the women were inclined to take PAP test or not. Recommendations included on-going cervical cancer screening campaigns and Health Education which will also focus on man and other stakeholders like traditional healers, for dissemination of information, and support from donors for provision of mobile cervical cancer screening services.

KEY WORDS: Perception, Cervical cancer, PAP smear, Women, Screening,