



ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Viral suppression among patients on antiretroviral therapy and the influence of demographic variables: Clinical evidence from a Nigerian tertiary hospital

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To cite this article: Onah PO and Siyaka A. Viral suppression among patients on antiretroviral therapy and the influence of demographic variables: Clinical evidence from a Nigerian tertiary hospital. Journal of Basic and Social Pharmacy Research, 2022;2(6):1-12
ISSN: 2705-3245

ABSTRACT

Background: Antiretroviral therapy is aimed at suppressing viral replication to undetectable level in the blood. This helps to slow down disease progression, reduce incidence of opportunistic infections, lower the risk of transmission and improve quality of life of patients. Viral suppression is increasingly becoming a clinical challenge as evidence of non-suppression is becoming more common among patients on HAART.

Objective: This study aims to determine the rate and factors associated with viral suppression among adult HIV/AIDS patients on highly active antiretroviral therapy

Methods: This was a retrospective study involving 405 patients on four different HAART regimens. The study was carried out between 2016 and 2018 in ARV clinic of a tertiary care hospital using data obtained from medical records of patients. The primary outcome measure of viral load suppression is defined as <1000 copies/ml. Analysis was carried out using descriptive and inferential statistics. P value < 0.05 was considered significant

Results: The proportion of patients who achieved viral suppression was 74.2% which is lower than 95% global target. The result showed no significant differences in the rate of viral suppression between the four HAART regimens in this study. There was also no significant association between demographic factors and viral suppression.

Conclusion: The rate of viral suppression in this study was lower than the UNAIDS target of 95%. This finding makes a case for greater improvement and strengthening of existing programme interventions aimed at promoting long term suppression of viral replication.

Keywords: HIV/AIDS, Viral load, Viral suppression, HAART, Adherence, Regimen