Feasibility, acceptability and accuracy of patient self-testing for HIV using point-of-care (POC) HIV tests in an Emergency Department Setting

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Objectives

• To evaluate the feasibility, acceptability and accuracy of existing point-of-care (POC) HIV tests performed by an untrained patient compared to results of a standard-of-care POC HIV test performed by a trained health care professional in an urban emergency department (ED).

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Methods

From April-Nov 2008, 173 patients from the Johns Hopkins University Emergency Department (ED) who had already received a standard-of-care HIV oral fluid test (OraQuick Advance), performed by a trained healthcare worker, were approached to volunteer for self-performing a rapid Point of Care (POC) (Rapid) HIV test.

Patients aged 18 to 64 years without a previous HIV diagnosis were eligible.

Consented patients, who were unaware of their HIV test result, were given a choice of performing the OraQuick Advance (oral fluid) or Trinity Unigold (fingerstick blood) POC HIV test. Eighty-two percent of patients in the oral group and 94% of patients in the blood group reported trusting the self-administered test result very much. Results obtained by the healthcare worker were trusted very much by 87% and 78% of patients in the oral and fingerstick test group, respectively. A significant proportion of patients offered POC testing in the ED preferred using oral fluid over fingerstick for POC HIV self-testing.

Project coordinators offered the test kits to the patients after the choice of test was made. Large plasticized instruction templates were offered as visual aids.

Acceptability was accessed by a questionnaire.