

Effects of Covid-19 On Utilization of Adolescent and Youth Friendly Health Services in Lira District.

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Purpose: This study assessed the effects of covid-19 on utilization of adolescent and youth friendly services in Lira district.

Objectives: To assess the effects of covid-19 and factors affecting the extent of utilization of adolescent and youth friendly services in Lira district.

Methods: This was a quantitative cross-sectional study utilizing both primary and secondary data from two H/C IVs (Amac and Ogur) in Lira district. Primary data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire and review of secondary data on utilization of adolescent and youth friendly services from facility records before and during the covid-19 period was used. Simple random sampling technique was used and data was analyzed using STATA version 15.

Results: A total of 296 female participants were recruited of which the median age was 15 years (IQR 12-18). Majority of the participants were; Students (62.7%), from rural areas (94.5%), never married (70.6%), had attained primary education as the highest level (91.6%), and belong to catholic or Anglican religion (80%). Utilization of AFHS was 40% lower during the lockdown period (IRR=0.60, CI: 38%-95%) in comparison to the pre-covid-19 period. Being an adolescent girl of older age (AOR: 3.82, C.I: 2.31, 6.32) and being unmarried (AOR: 0.69, C.I:0.53, 0.88) were highly associated with use of adolescent friendly services.

Conclusion: COVID 19 lockdown caused significant decline in utilization of AFHS in Lira. Preparedness plans and strategies for adolescent girls are required to sustain services during pandemics to mitigate adverse health outcomes.