

The Strategy for The Elimination of Mother-To-Child Transmission of HIV in Taiwan, 2005–2019

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Abstract

Since 2005, to prevent mother-to-child transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Taiwan has provided free HIV testing at antenatal care for pregnant women, and medical care services for pregnant women and suspect HIV-infected infants. By the end of 2019, the total number of HIV reported cases through HIV testing at antenatal care was 452 cases, with 497 infants provided with medical care services, and 12 mother-to-child transmission cases were reported after follow-up. In further investigation on the causes of these HIV infected infants, we discovered that the pregnant women did not receive HIV screening during pregnancy, the test for HIV was not executed until the second or third antenatal care, and the HIV-infected pregnant women did not receive medical treatment during pregnancy. In addition, some pregnant women whose initial HIV testing result (e.g., EIA/PA tests) was positive, however, the health care workers did not follow to confirm their HIV status, and the children born to the HIV-infected women were not retrospectively traced back before the policy of pregnancy screening was initiated, which might also miss the chance to prevent mother-to-child transmission, or the early detection and prevention of disease. In summary, to achieve the goal of eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV, testing at antenatal care for pregnant women is an important policy. However, more comprehensive measures are needed, including HIV/AIDS education about HIV screening, follow-up of the pregnant woman with suspected of infection with HIV, and strengthening the HIV-infected maternal medical care management.

Keywords: HIV infection, mother-to-child transmission, female HIV infection

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