



Longitudinal research with rape survivors: reporting from the South African- Rape Impact Cohort Evaluation (RICE) study

ILD Public Lecture Series

Speaker: Naemah Abrahams

10 March 2021 | 5.30-7.00pm



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Abstract: HIV and rape are co-occurring intersecting epidemics both driven by gender inequality. This is of huge concern in sub-Saharan Africa with the largest burden of HIV and a region with the highest prevalence of gender-based violence. Although there has been a huge increase in research on gender-based violence in the last 10 years, the health burden associated with sexual violence remains scant. In this presentation I will discuss the Rape Impact Cohort Evaluation (RICE) study conducted in Durban, South Africa. Women aged 16–40 years were enrolled soon after reporting a rape to post-rape care services, and a control group of women (no rape exposure) from Primary Health Care services. A total of 1799 women (852 rape exposed and 947 control participants) were enrolled and followed up for a minimum of 12 months and maximum of 36 months. One of the main research questions was to investigate the effect of rape exposure on HIV incidence over the follow-up period. We found rape is a long-term risk factor for HIV acquisition. This and the potential role of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for rape survivors will be discussed.



Bio: Naeemah Abrahams is the Director of the Gender & Health Research Unit of the South African Medical Research Council. She is a NRF B rated scientist and has worked in the area of gender -based violence research for more than 25 years. Her research focus is on the intersections between gender-based violence and health, including the interface with HIV, measurement of violence against women and children and femicide. She has an honorary position as a Professor with the Women's Health Research Unit, at University of Cape Town and is lead researcher on the Rape Impact Cohort Evaluation (RICE) study



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