

UROP PROJECT : HIV/AIDS, FACIAL LIPOATROPHY AND RECONSTRUCTIVE TREATMENTS

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Background

Facial lipoatrophy (FLA) is a condition that has been described as the hallmark of body fat changes in people living with HIV/AIDS. Over the years, healthcare professionals have acknowledged that facial lipoatrophy is detrimental to the quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS and have expressed a growing concern for the psychosocial impact of this condition. Researchers have also come to demonstrate that people who suffer from facial lipoatrophy report higher incidences of social and psychological distress. Of particular interest to this project are studies that document the positive effects of reconstructive treatments on the lives of people who would otherwise be permanently redefined by this condition. The main objective of this qualitative research was to explore the lived experience of reconstructive treatments from the perspective of people who suffer from facial lipoatrophy.

Methodological Considerations

Research Sample

Twelve participants took part in the study which was based in Montreal and was conducted during the summer of 2010.

	Number of participants (n=12)	
Age	Average : 50 years old	
Sex	Male	11
	Female	1
Year of diagnostic	< 1990	3
	1990-1995	7
	1996-2000	1
	> 2000	1
Year of first antiretroviral regimen	< 1990	3
	1990-1995	4
	1996-2000	4
	> 2000	1
Annual income	< 20 000	10
	20 000-40 000	2
Education level	Secondary	7
	Post-secondary	5
Reconstructive treatments	Sculptra - NewFill	9
	Bio-Alcamid	1
	Both	2

Data Collection and Analysis

The data was collected using semi-structured in-depth interviews and was then analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. The results were further analyzed using a critical theoretical framework. During the analysis, a number of themes emerged from the data and were further developed into sub-themes (see analysis and synthesis of findings).

Activities

Four activities were undertaken as part of the project:

1. Analysis and synthesis of findings
2. Review of the literature
3. Diffusion of results and community involvement
4. Social and political actions

Analysis and Synthesis of Findings

During the analysis, four themes emerged from the data and were further developed into sub-themes:

Vulnerability

The experiences of people who suffer from facial lipoatrophy and the production of vulnerabilities (health, economic, social)

Reconstruction

The experiences of people who suffer from facial lipoatrophy in relation to the desired and undesired effects of reconstructive treatments

Resurfacing

The experiences of people who are confronted with the temporary effects of reconstructive treatments and the resurfacing of FLA

Access

The experiences of people who suffer from facial lipoatrophy in relation to reconstructive treatments in a context where these treatments are not publicly insured in Canada

Review of the Literature

We conducted a review of the literature using the CINALH (nursing and allied professionals) and MEDLINE (medicine) databases.

Keywords such as AIDS, facial lipoatrophy, HIV, and treatments were used to conduct the search.

Articles written in English or French and between 2006 to 2011 were selected for the purpose of this activity.

Articles were reviewed and will serve to support upcoming social and political actions.

The literature identified will also be used to complement a review of the literature that was conducted in 2006 (Loufty and Major, 2006).

Diffusion of Results and Community Involvement

Preparation of an abstract and submission for a poster presentation at the Annual Conference of the Canadian Association of HIV Research, April 2011, Toronto.

Presentation of the findings at the Annual Conference of the Canadian Association of Nurses in AIDS Care, March 2011, Montreal.

Sharing of ideas with regard to the diffusion of the results at the community level and the development of advocacy strategies for people who suffer from FLA (in progress).

Social and Political Actions

Sharing of ideas with regard to future social and political actions that will be conducted in the province of Quebec (in progress).

Preparation work for a report entitled : "La face cachée de la trithérapie: de l'exclusion sociale à la mort au monde" which will be submitted to l'Assemblée Nationale in Quebec city.

Preparation work for a petition that will be circulating for the coverage of reconstructive treatments in the province of Quebec.



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