

# INFORMATION NEEDS, SOURCES AND BARRIERS TO ACCESS INFORMATION OF HPV+/NORMAL PAP WOMEN OF A SUBURBAN AREA OF BUENOS AIRES

## INTRODUCTION

HPV positive women with a normal pap smear (HPV+/normal pap) present a high risk of developing high-grade lesions but they have low levels of adherence to re-screening at 18 months in Argentina. Information provided to these women about the results is key to assure adherence to follow-up.

We identified information needs, information sources and barriers to access information among HPV+/normal pap women, after having received their screening results.

## METHODS

During 2020, semi-structured virtual interviews were carried out (f=22 women).

### INCLUSION CRITERIA



Being aged 30-64



Having HPV+/normal pap results



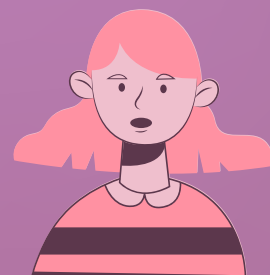
Residing in Ituzaingó, (Buenos Aires Metropolitan area).

Thematic analysis was carried out following the guidelines of grounded theory methodological approach.

## RESULTS

### BARRIERS TO ACCESS INFORMATION

- 1 Insufficient information provided by health professionals during consultation.



*"...they don't give you much information. It's like they don't want to worry you too much, but they don't leave you with any peace of mind either."*

(Marisa, 35 years old)

- 2 Difficulties to raise questions during medical consultation.

*"...a gynecologist ordered me a test and it was positive. I didn't ask her what it was that I had. I couldn't."*

(Monica, 51)



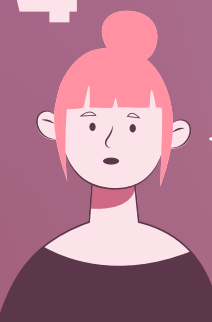
- 3 Fake or inaccurate information from the internet.

*"I used to surf the internet but I found a lot of wrong information and many things that weren't real and I got scared"*

(Ana, 44)



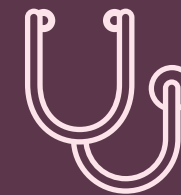
- 4 Health system inaccessibility



*"I didn't come back...to my appointments, the bus strikes started, then the doctors went on strike, and I had to go again at 4 o'clock in the morning if I wanted to get the appointment..."*

(Alicia, 52)

### INFORMATION SOURCES



#### MEDICAL CONSULTATION

Although information provided by health practitioners was insufficient.



#### INTERNET

Where they tried to distinguish between accurate and false data.



#### CLOSE RELATIVES

Especially other women who have had similar diagnosis.

### INFORMATION NEEDS

#### PERCEIVED INFORMATION NEEDS

- 1) Information on the sexual transmission of the virus and other possible forms of transmission.
- 2) What it means having an HPV+/Pap normal result, and its relation with cancer.
- 3) Recommended follow-up after an HPV+/normal Pap result; explanations about the lack of treatment.

#### UNPERCEIVED INFORMATION NEEDS

- 1) Association between HPV+ result and other gynecological health problems (e.g. heavy menstruation, cysts, and other gynecological problems as being linked to the HPV+ result).
- 2) Clarifications about socio-cultural misconceptions on HPV and cancer (e.g. perceiving young women as the ones that should "get checked" the most; arguing that "we all have cancer; it is asleep until it wakes up").

## CONCLUSIONS

In order to overcome barriers to access information among HPV+/normal pap women, changes in information provision are necessary. It is crucial to strengthen the delivery of diagnosis at the medical consultation, with a patient centered approach, as well as to consider implementing new formats to provide information after consultation, such as remote counselling, institutional websites, forums or mobile apps.