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The effects of group counseling on knowledge and performance about cervical cancer screening among rural women in Kaboudarahang city, Iran

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Background & Aim: Cervical cancer has high incidence and mortality rate but the screening program can detect it in early stages. Due to the high prevalence of this cancer counseling sessions to raise awareness and improve screening programs for cervical cancer is essential. This study aimed to determine the effect of group counseling on knowledge and practice regarding cervical cancer screening in rural women.

Materials & Methods: In this quasi experimental study 80 married women under coverage of Kabodrahang health centers in 2015 participated and evaluated in two experimental and control groups (each group n = 40) who were selected for the lottery. Data collection tool was a valid and reliable questionnaire including demographic information, knowledge and women's performance. First, both groups completed a questionnaire then, Intervention group Participated in counseling held by three weekly sessions, using of GATHER steps and using posters and pamphlets with a capacity of 8-10 people per session. It involves consulting about cervical cancer, its symptoms and prevention of cervical cancer. Follow-up period to assess the effects of group counseling on the performance of rural women for cervical cancer screening in two months, both groups completed questionnaires and Pap smears were evaluated in two groups.

Results: Before the intervention, the two groups showed no significant difference in terms of awareness ($P = .292$). After intervention, the Mean knowledge score in the intervention group significantly increased from 52.72 before intervention to 76/62 after intervention and In the control group ,the Mean knowledge score in increased from 54.67 before intervention to 56.4, but the increasing difference between the two groups after intervention was significant ($P < 0.001$). Two months after intervention 17 women (42/5%) in the intervention group and 4 (10%) women in the control group (10%) underwent Pap smear test ($P < 0.001$).

Conclusion: Design and implementation of counseling programs can increase awareness and performance about cervical cancer in rural women.

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