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**Sexually transmitted infections: Knowledge, perceptions, and attitudes of youth in a mining community, a focus group discussion study of obuasi municipality of Ghana**

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Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) remain a public health problem globally with youth disproportionately affected by the epidemic. Furthermore, high prevalence of STIs have been linked with mining communities in the literature. The combined effect of being young and resident in a mining community therefore increases the vulnerability of this population to STIs. It is against this background that the study seeks to ascertain the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of STIs among youth in the Obuasi mining community. Using a qualitative approach, five focus group discussions that recruited 52 participants aged 15-24 years were conducted. The main themes for the FGDs were knowledge, perceptions, and attitudes on STIs. Results from the study revealed that youth in the mining community had fair knowledge of STIs generally, however, this knowledge is limited and fraught with misconceptions such as, candidiasis is an example of STI, oral contraceptives can prevent STIs, and all STIs are viral infections. It was also found that condom use is a preferable STI prevention method for the youth, yet they do not have extensive knowledge about condom use. Moreover, stigma, shame and unavailability of testing and treatment centers at the community level are major barriers to youth sexual health improvement and STIs control generally. Since behavior change which is influenced by knowledge, attitudes and perceptions is vital to the fight against STIs among the youth, any future interventions for STIs should include or better still target increasing STI knowledge, and improving attitude of youth in mining communities.

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