

KIGUNGU HEALTH CENTRE IV HAS A HIGH HIV PREVALENCE DUE TO INFLUX OF PEOPLE FROM KALANGALA

ENTEBBE

By Adolf Ayoreka

Pregnant women in Entebbe have been asked to desist from going to private health units for antenatal care because such facilities aim at maximising profits, rather than providing the required services.

The women were encouraged to visit government-aided health centres, where they do counselling, testing and treatment of the mother and her unborn baby. The call was made on Tuesday by a team of health experts from the US volunteering with Kitende Development Charity organisation at Kigungu Health Centre IV.

The team together with Mindset Development Organisation had gone to do general cleanliness in the hospital in a bid to improve the hygiene and sanitation of the facility.

"We are here on a campaign to curb mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS. We encourage pregnant women to do the antenatal visits with their partners, so that in case they are to be found HIV-positive, the health workers can devise means of preventing the baby from being infected with the virus," Mabel Nakibuuka, of Kitende Development Charity Organisation, said.

The idea was also echoed by Noeline Nabagabe, the officer in charge of Kigungu Health Centre

Use govt hospitals, Entebbe mothers told



Some of the pregnant women attending antenatal at Kigungu Health Centre. Photo by Adolf Ayoreka

IV: "Sometimes, couples want to keep their HIV status a secret from their partners because the HIV test is a must during the antenatal visit," Nabagabe noted.

She further noted that Kigungu Health centre IV is in an area where the HIV prevalence is high due to the influx of people from the Ssesse Islands. She revealed that out of 10 mothers, two test HIV-positive and that in a day they handle three to four mothers who come to give birth.

BETWEEN THE LINES:

■ The women were encouraged to visit government health centres, where they do counselling, testing and treatment of the mother and her unborn baby.

Nabagabe said the health centre faces a challenge of funding, especially so in the case of follow-ups on the HIV-positive mothers.

Maureen Mugisha, the chief executive officer of Mindset Organisation, said carrying out general cleaning was a form of corporate social responsibility to ensure that the health units are in a clean environment. She urged other organisations to do the same as a way of giving back to the community.