

**KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE  
STUDENTS LIVING ON THE HALLS OF RESIDENCE MONA  
CAMPUS WITH REGARDS TO DENGUE FEVER**

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## ABSTRACT

### Knowledge, Attitude and Perceptions of the Students Living on the Halls of Residence Mona Campus with regards to Dengue Fever

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**Background:** Dengue is endemic in Jamaica and in the wider Caribbean. The occurrence of dengue has been both more frequent and widespread in recent years due to the *flavivirus* being present, coupled with the high densities of the principle vector *Aedes aegypti* mosquito.

**Objective:** The purpose of this study was to assess the knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of students living on the halls of residence at Mona, of dengue fever, and to evaluate their knowledge of dengue prevention.

**Subjects:** The sample was taken from students residing on the six halls of residence Mona Campus. Three hundred and ninety one (391) respondents participated in the study.

**Design:** A cross-sectional design study was used coupled with qualitative research methodology. Data was gathered through a self-administered questionnaire, focus group discussion, and interviews.

**Results:** Results of the study indicate that it was clear that persons had some knowledge of dengue: 93% had heard about dengue, 54% knew about the main

vector, and 65% knew where they bred, however only 4% were able to identify the virus types in circulation. The ability to identify symptoms of dengue differed significantly between Barbadian students and respondents from other nationalities ( $\chi^2 = 15.774$ ,  $df = 4$  P value 0.001). A significantly higher number of Barbadian students 29% were affected by dengue as shown by ( $\chi^2 = 11.6$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p = 0.008$ ). Seventy percent (70%) of Barbadians correctly identified that dengue was endemic within the Caribbean compared to thirty-nine percent (39.9%) from Jamaica. This difference was significant with a ( $\chi^2 = 15.36$ ,  $df = 16$ ,  $p = 0.018$ ).

**Conclusion:** The study concluded that Jamaican nationals who were the majority of students polled in the study had the poorest knowledge of dengue. This implies that there is a need to develop dengue awareness and educational programmes amongst university students and the wider society to aid in the prevention and control of this disease.