

ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF THE BARRIERS TO PROSTATE CANCER SCREENING: A JAMAICAN PERSPECTIVE

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The study examined the barriers to prostate cancer screening among Jamaican males age 18 - 65 years employed to National Water Commission (NWC) in selected parishes in the Western region of Jamaica.

A convenience sample was used to select subjects from whom quantitative data were drawn and two focus group sessions were conducted from which qualitative data were drawn. The data collection instruments consisted of a 47-item questionnaire that was administered to all sample members who supplied quantitative data, and a focus group discussion guide was used for both groups that supplied qualitative data.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 11.5 was used to analyze the data. First analysis was done using simple descriptive statistics followed by other tests e.g. Pearson's Chi square to identify significant relationships between variables.

Findings revealed that although 88% of respondents perceived themselves to be at risk of developing prostate cancer, more than half 55% of the sample had never had a screening test done. Age was significantly related to the preferred screening modality. Younger men had a preference for the Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) screening method while older men had a preference for the Digital Rectal Examination (DRE). In the under 25 years age group there was a 100% preference for the Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) screening method. Spouses and physicians are key people in influencing males to have the screen tests done. The issue of embarrassment was not a significant factor in determining whether or not persons would have the Digital Rectal Examination (DRE) done.

Recommendations:

1. NWC include mandatory prostate cancer screening as a component of its pre-employment and annual medical requirements for male employees.
2. Doctors become more proactive in recommending and or performing prostate cancer screen tests for their male patients.
3. Massive National Health Promotion Programme re Prostate Cancer Prevention.

Key words: Fendly Feany Foster; barriers; prostate cancer screening; Jamaican perspective