

ABSTRACT

PHC RELATED KNOWLEDGE ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC STAFF AND MEDICAL GRADUATES OF THE FACULTY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES MONA, UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

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Primary health care (PHC) is the designated mode to achieve Health For All (HFA) by the Year 2000 (HFA 2000). To this end many organisations and institutions have implemented training programmes to ensure the dissemination of information relating to this concept.

In April 1994, a cross-sectional study was conducted on a sample of 81 members of the academic staff of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, Mona, and 81 medical graduates for the years 1982-1992. A self-administered questionnaire was used to ascertain information on knowledge, attitudes and perceptions.

The study revealed that knowledge about HFA and PHC was widely disseminated among both groups although specific knowledge components were far from clear. The graduates scored always marginally better than faculty for knowledge ($p < 0.0005$).

Both groups reported favourable attitudes towards HFA and PHC. However a considerable proportion reported that "HFA is a Utopian ideal. The graduates showed higher attitudinal scores than the faculty ($p < 0.004$). Seventy seven percent of the academic staff and 85 % of the graduates perceived PHC to be of practical significance to their job while 43 % and 58 % of the academic staff and graduates respectively considered the faculty training to be inadequate.

These findings suggest that the Faculty of Medical Sciences should have continuing medical education activities giving greater importance to primary health care. Further, periodic and summative evaluation of all programmes be conducted.