

ABSTRACT

A Survey of the Knowledge, Attitude, Practice and Perception of Diabetics on Insulin

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This cross sectional survey of diabetics on insulin therapy sought to identify the level of knowledge of patients on insulin regarding diabetes and insulin therapy and to ascertain the perception, attitudinal and behavioural practices of these clients as it relates to insulin therapy and self administration in St. Thomas, Jamaica.

A total of 107 clients were interviewed using a structured questionnaire which was administered as an interview schedule. Three focus group discussions were also conducted.

Knowledge was high in the area of responses to whether or not insulin lowers the blood sugar, what is to be done if the respondents felt bad after taking insulin and also where insulin is injected.

The highest percentage response to the question assessing knowledge was found in clients who used insulin between 5 - 9 years. There was poor knowledge in the questions addressing identification of insulin by type and brand and in addition most persons felt it was alright to miss insulin for a day. This could influence the practices being carried out by diabetics and quite likely place them at high risk for hypoglycaemia and hyperglycaemia.

Most respondents had a fair attitude towards insulin therapy when compared to the length of use of insulin. Most persons also showed a fair attitude towards their treatment particularly those with over ten years of use.

The role of health education and other types of support for diabetics on insulin therapy were identified among factors that could facilitate better practices. Keen attention should be paid to the socio economic environment as it impacts readily on these clients especially the elderly and the indigent in their ability to care for themselves.