

ABSTRACT

The primary focus of the study is the prevalence of pneumoconioses diagnosed at the National Chest Hospital during the decade 1980 - 1989, with a view to determining the characteristics of the patients and the characteristics of the environment to which patients had been exposed. It is hoped that the findings will give a general picture of the status of the diseases in Jamaica.

The methodology used for data collection was primarily the perusal of docketts at the hospital. A total of thirty cases were diagnosed over the decade representing four diseases in the category namely, pulmonary fibrosis, asbestosis, anthracosis and silicosis. Owing to the rarity of the diseases and consequently the few cases diagnosed over the period the data did not lend itself to certain statistical analyses.

The cases diagnosed were more frequent among males in the older age groups. Most cases were also from Kingston due to the fact that it is the primary urban centre in Jamaica. Based on occupation, it was easy to fathom why some persons were diseased.

The study primarily concludes that pneumoconioses are rare diseases in Jamaica and that the system of record keeping at the National Chest Hospital needs to be improved.