

ABSTRACT

An eight week study of trauma was undertaken at two major public hospitals in Kingston, Bustamante Hospital for Children (BCH) and Kingston Public Hospital (KPH) to determine its importance in relation to overall hospital admissions.

A census of all cases (prevalence cases) was collected on day one of the study at both hospitals. These were grouped according to trauma, non-trauma and gender.

Cases admitted (incidence cases) were collected on subsequent weekly visits over the period of study, March - April 1990. The injuries were grouped by cause, circumstance and place of occurrence.

Trauma accounted for 22% of the 2,858 admissions to hospital during the study period and a quarter of these were children under the age of ten. In the children, the male to female ratio was 2:1 while in the adults it was 3:1.

Falls were the commonest cause of injury in children, occurring in just over 25% of cases with motor vehicle accidents (MVA's) and burns comprising the two next most common groups. The majority of injuries in children occurred around the home as a result of domestic accidents.

Forty percent of the adult trauma admissions were in the 20-29 age group, with a male:female ratio of 4:1. Penetrating injuries and MVA's were the commonest reasons for admission, while gunshot wounds made up the next most important group. The ratio of intentional to non-intentional trauma in adults was 1.3:1. In teenagers and young adult males, trauma from interpersonal violence was a noticeable feature.

This study, though small, gave some indications of areas that need to be further addressed.