

PREVALENCE OF RISK FACTORS FOR NON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES IN THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO REGIMENT

Renee Telesford

Project Supervisor: Dr Isabella Granderson

2011

Background: The Trinidad and Tobago Regiment is the main force element of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force. Chronic diseases are diseases of long duration and generally slow progression. Experts are beginning to notice alarming increases in cases of obesity, diabetes, hypertension and some cancers in the region over the same period. Concerns exist about the cardiovascular health implications of the officers within the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment since they too comprise of the population that are susceptible to non communicable chronic diseases.

Objective: To determine the prevalence and of risk factors for non communicable diseases among officers in the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment using WHO stepwise approach.

Design: The participants in the survey comprised of male and female officers within the various barracks within the Trinidad and Tobago, 96 participants. The study was conducted in the Medical Inspection room situated in the Teteron Barracks, Cumuto. The data on diet and physical activity were based on participant's responses to questions in the diet and physical activity module of the modified version of the WHO Stepwise questionnaire and the participant's weight and height were measured.

Results: The major non communicable disease risk factors included self-reported information on fruit and vegetable intake and measured body weight, height, waist circumference as opposed to a low prevalence in physical inactivity. However it was seen that though most the participants were physically active there was a high percentage prevalence of obesity and abdominal obesity, women having a higher percentage in abdominal obesity. There is a high usage of vegetable in meal preparation and a high consumption of whole grain foods.

Conclusion: The officers within the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment are seen to have a high prevalence of risk factors in terms of vegetable and fruit consumption and obesity however a low prevalence in terms of physical activity.