

ABSTRACT

The State of Readiness of The Kingston & St. Andrew Members of the General Practitioners Association in Dealing with the Growing HIV Epidemic

This study sought to assess and describe the state of readiness of, the members of the General Practitioners Association in Kingston and St. Andrew Jamaica, to deal with the HIV epidemic.

The nature of the HIV epidemic, its history, its impact on society and number of cases globally, regionally and locally are all described as a background to the problem.

The nature and development of the doctor's role in society, his relationship with his patient, and his role in a health crisis such as an epidemic are also discussed.

The membership list of the General Practitioners Association was used as a sample frame for the study. In choosing the sample the starting point was randomly selected, and selection of sample was completed through the systematic sampling method.

This study was pursued because although HIV is more than a medical problem and involves many social and economic issues, it

presents itself as an illness, and those who must needs attend to illnesses will/do have an important role to play in the control of the epidemic. Private General Practitioners were examined because the concept of privatization of health care is now current and being mooted. The private sector is also important because it already sees a significant number of persons seeking care. A study looking at the private doctor's role, then could feasibly start with the members of the General Practitioners Association.

More than half the sample felt they were not, or were not sure if they are, ready for the epidemic. This bore out in the data collected. Only 32% had treated persons with HIV+/AIDS, and only half the sample had diagnosed HIV and/or AIDS.

There appears to be a willingness however to be involved in the process of educating patients and a sense that controlling the epidemic falls within their area of responsibility.