

ABSTRACT

An Evaluation of the Status of Leprosy in Jamaica

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The incidence and prevalence rates of leprosy in Jamaica during the period 1982-1992 were compared and the level of the knowledge, attitudes and practices of both health workers and leprosy patients towards leprosy and the leprosy programme were determined.

Statistical data were collected through the examination of records and the administration of questionnaires. A sample of 188 health workers and 30 leprosy patients were chosen from the South East Health Region.

The incidence and prevalence rates have remained relatively low, averaging 0.029/10,000 and 0.69/10,000 respectively. Since the beginning of the period (1982), Jamaica has, by WHO standards, attained the status of elimination of leprosy (prevalence of less than 1 case per 10,000 population).

The knowledge, attitudes and practices of both health workers and patients have improved when compared with previous studies (Raglan, 1976; Ministry of Health, 1985-1988).