

## **Abstract**

### **Knowledge and Attitude of Primary Health Care Workers and Care Givers in the Parish of Trelawny towards Schizophrenia and the Impact of Schizophrenia on the Family**

**Tatlin D. Fider**

This is a cross sectional study conducted in the parish of Trelawny which investigated the knowledge and attitude of Primary Health Care (PHC) workers and care givers of schizophrenic patients towards schizophrenia, and the impact of schizophrenia on the family.

The study population comprised the total population of care givers of schizophrenic patients and primary health care workers in the parish of Trelawny. Care givers numbered 84 and primary health care workers numbered 60.

It was observed that the majority of care givers were females and over 50% were over the age of 50 years. PHC workers were all female with a wide range of working experience of under one year to over 34 years. Community Health Aides accounted for 57.7% of these PHC workers.

On the average, knowledge and attitude of PHC workers could be regarded as fair. Knowledge of PHC workers when compared with that of care givers differed significantly but attitude scores did not. It was observed that the knowledge and attitude of PHC workers with family

members affected with schizophrenia, when compared with PHC workers without, scores did not differ significantly statistically.

The degree of burden of schizophrenia on the family was not significant. Less than 50% said they were stressed out having to care for the ill family member. However, expressions of fear, anger, love and concern were all noted.

The family and the health care provider were the main sources of support for the individuals affected with schizophrenia, and emphasis on the use of medications to control the illness was observed. In spite of the limited health manpower and facilities, care givers of schizophrenic patients appeared satisfied with services provided.

Very little in terms of social services and community support groups was evident, but care givers and PHC workers all expressed willingness to be a part of community support groups for families and clients exhausted from the task of care giving.