

ABSTRACT

A SURVEY OF PATIENTS' SATISFACTION WITH THE QUALITY OF
SERVICES OFFERED AT SELECTED PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRES
IN KINGSTON AND ST ANDREW,
JAMAICA

Chandra Sekhar Chennabathni

It is imperative to assess the quality of services provided especially prior to making any major organisational changes. Such assessments furnish a strong platform for planning. The aim of this study was to evaluate the quality of services from the perspective of those who receive the health care.

A survey was carried out over a ten-day period on a sample of 261 patients selected from seven primary health care centres within the parishes of Kingston and St Andrew.

The results revealed that three quarters of the users of health centres lived within a radius of five miles. In addition, three quarters of the respondents were knowledgeable about the type of health services available to them. Within this group there were more females (79 % of respondents) than males (65 % of all male respondents). Seventy per cent of respondents had a positive attitude towards the fee-payment for services. The younger age group had a more positive

attitude towards fee-payment than older respondents. Respondents with relatively high education levels also had more positive attitudes towards fee-payment than less educated respondents.

Approximately 50 per cent of the respondents reported being satisfied with the interpersonal relationship with their doctors and nurses, while only 20 per cent expressed satisfaction for the relationship with their pharmacists.

More than the three quarters of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the physical facilities at the health centres. A high proportion (92 %) of the clientele was dissatisfied with the health care delivery process.

The majority of the health care receivers were not satisfied with the health service offered to them. Lack of interpersonal skills in health care professionals, defects in the health system and deficiencies in the health service delivery processes are suggested from this data. Hence there is a need for a new approach - 'Customer mindedness' or 'Continuous Quality Improvement' in order to design, develop and deliver quality care.