

ABSTRACT

Two years after the opening in Grenada of the Carlton House Alcoholism Treatment Centre, a review was conducted of the 45 persons admitted over a six-month period beginning February 1987, and a three month treatment outcome review was done.

The review of admissions, using the CAGE questionnaire, shows findings similar to those in other hospital and field surveys in the Eastern Caribbean in terms of sex ratio (8 to 1), age of admission and age of first drink, social class distribution, choice of drink (rum) and a distribution of religious affiliation which reflects that of the population at large. Other characteristics of the Grenada study were that 25 of the 45 patients had first degree relatives who were alcoholic; half of the referrals were from a medical source, mainly the psychiatrist; although 1 in 12 general hospital admissions were diagnosed as suffering from alcoholism, only one fifth of these were referred to the Centre by physicians. One third of the patients had lost employment as a result of drinking. Treatment outcome was not improved by contact with Alcoholics Anonymous, but there was a better recovery rate among skilled than unskilled persons as judged by the number of relapses.

Recommendations for improved staffing are made, as well as a plea for greater awareness of alcoholism on the part of physicians and surgeons.