

ABSTRACT

The study of factors influencing the care of patients with epilepsy in Kawempe Division -Kampala District involved 150 respondents (70 patients with epilepsy, 70 care takers to patients with epilepsy and 10 health workers to patients with epilepsy) who were purposively selected from the community.

The major objective was to establish the factors influencing the care of patients with epilepsy in Kawempe Division-Kampala District.

To achieve this, the study employed a cross sectional and descriptive design using both qualitative and quantitative study techniques.

Data was collected using five-scale likert questionnaires which administered to patients with epilepsy and care takers to patients with epilepsy that were interviewed.

Some selected health workers who were treating patients with epilepsy on the daily basis in the two health centers in Kawempe Division were interviewed using an interview guide and these were used as key informants.

Study findings revealed that the waiting time by patients with epilepsy to access or to be attended to by a health worker is so long. Patients with epilepsy stated that they could wait for more than 6hours before being attended to by the health workers.

The study also revealed that cultural beliefs for example that the fluids from patients with epilepsy such as blood, urine and breath can spread the disease to the care takers to patients with epilepsy. Another commonly held cultural belief in Kawempe was that once a patient with epilepsy is burnt, s/he will never get healed.

The study also revealed that majority of patients with epilepsy and the caretakers to patients with epilepsy that were interviewed were unable to cater for their essential and health care needs.

The study findings also revealed that the health workers were dissatisfied with their remuneration and allowance for the work they do, as a result this lead to lack of motivation to care for patients with epilepsy.

The study recommends that there is need for the government to intensify on health workers' capacity building especially in areas of mental health and epilepsy, in order to increase the number of health workers that attend to patients with epilepsy, and this will help reduce the time one has to take waiting to be attended to.

There is also need to improve remunerations of health workers which will consequently motivate them to provide better services to their clients and this will probably as a result increase service utilization.

There is need for the government to intensify on health education and primary health care in the communities which will greatly increase knowledge of epilepsy care and consequently increase uptake of epilepsy care services.

The study concluded that the whole epilepsy care services delivered in Kawempe Division was appropriate although some gaps were reported in terms waiting so long in line, Lack of equipment for diagnosing epilepsy, cultural beliefs, Lack of motivation by health workers and inappropriate facilities such as drugs that were the key factors influencing the care for patients with epilepsy in Kawempe Division.