

ABSTRACT

Background: The study of factors influencing the utilization of mental health services among the residents was done in Bbaale sub district.

Objective: To describe the factors influencing the utilization of mental health services among the residents of Bbaale sub district

Method: The study employed a cross sectional descriptive study design using quantitative approaches to study the factors influencing the utilization of mental health services among the residents of Bbaale sub district.

Results: It was found that women are the majority care takers of the mentally ill and they prefer government health facility for their mental health services which they consider as convenient and cheap to use. The residents are aware of the availability of mental health services and they general have good practice. There are few qualifies mental health workers and some resident don't use the service.

Conclusion: Most respondents had appropriate knowledge about mental illnesses and available mental health services in their locality and had good practices towards mental health services utilization. Respondents interviewed had good attitudes towards mental health services utilization. Mental health services are free unlike others medical service although some residents don't take the relative for treatment. There are few qualified mental health workers and are not motivated to treat the mentally ill clients. The mental health service are accessed by all the residents although some don't use it that results in patients wandering on the streets.

Recommendation: The District health office needs to collaborate with local politicians to sensitize and mobilize the community for mental health outreach services. Government needs recruit and train more mental health workers to handle the workload and they should be facilitated especially with transport to run outreach programs. This will help to cover people who stay far from mental health units/health centers. MOH needs strengthen mental health campaign through schools, church leaders since these people are directly involved in dissemination of information through various media like Radios and Newspaper. There is also need to train private medical practitioners and equip them with mental health knowledge.

The local leaders in collaboration with mental health workers need to intensify community mobilization for mental health services.