

## ABSTRACT

Self medication is the use of drugs without guidance of trained health care personnel. It is 50% in developed countries and over 70% in developing countries due to poor health care systems. This study assessed the social demographic, individual and health related factors associated with self-medication to children under five years in Butansi village, Kamuli District.

A descriptive cross sectional study design was used to collect information from a sample size of 244 respondents through interviews. Caretakers with children under five years of age who consented during our study period were included as our sample population. The data collected was exposed to statistical analysis version 17, presented with aid of Microsoft excel and word on form of frequency tables.

Individually, 212 (87%) perceived some diseases to be minor, 224(92%) shared the prescribed medicines because 51(55%) wanted to save medical expenses and the commonly taken drugs were NSAIDs. Drugs at the local pharmacies were affordable 215(88%) and 176(72%) resided nearer to pharmacies and drug shops and malaria 84(52%) was the commonest treated disease.

Public health facilities were far 132(54%), 154(63%) health workers had negative attitude, 85(55%) prescribed medicines without diagnosis, 198(81%) were asked for money for treatment which forced 178(73%) resort to self medication. long waiting 119(49%) with inadequate beds and seats 142(58%) at the facility. Information about medicine use was not well displayed in health facility 156 (64%), 207(85%) got incomplete doses which forced 161(78%) to buy them from the nearby pharmacies and drug shops. All these increased the incidence of self medication.

Despite being informed about self medication, the high levels of poverty among respondents and unavailability of health care services coupled with long distances to the public health centre yet local

pharmacies were nearer and sold drugs cheaply, self medication was the last resort to community members to save the lives of their children.

Better facilitated public health centre be constructed in Butansi village and sale of drugs at local pharmacies should be revised accompanied with more sensitization about the implications of self medication by the government.