

ABSTRACT

Background: Infant mortality rate and child mortality rate still remain high at 54 per 1,000 live births and 38 out of 1,000 respectively. Child health services are interventions put in place to curb down morbidity and mortality in children. The immunization coverage in Uganda remains low at 52%. In South western Uganda, 55.9 % of the children were found to have worms growth monitoring services where in only 65% of the health units and only 64% of health facilities were able to give all the child health services.

Study objective: To determine the proportion of children aged between 6months and five years utilizing child health services and to establish the factors affecting utilization in Kyanamira sub county.

Methodology: A cross-sectional community based study was conducted in July, 2014 in Kyanamira sub county, Kabale district. Simple random sampling was used to select three parishes and purposive sampling was done to select individual participants. A total of 403 caretakers having a child between 6months and five years were selected from three parishes and six villages. Data were entered in to the computer using EPI-data and analyzed by SPSS version 16 statistical software package.

Results: About 77.7% of the children between 6months and 5years were utilizing the child health services. Uptake of immunization services was over 90%, only 79% had received polio. Utilization of vitamin A supplements was highest at 6months of age at 69% and kept reducing as age reduced. Uptake of deworming services was highest at one year of age at 63.8% and kept reducing as age increased. Only 77.7% of the children had had their growth monitored. The study revealed that caretakers were more likely to utilize child health services if they were more educated and Anglicans with P-value at 0.007. Household income had an effect on utilization of child health services at a P-value of 0.034. The knowledge and attitude of the caretaker positively affected the use of the service at P-value of 0.001. Caretakers who had received health education were more likely with a P-value of 0.028 to utilize the services than those who did not receive it. The caretakers who were treated very well by health workers were more likely utilize services than those who were treated badly.

Conclusion: Utilization of child health services is still low in children between 6 months and 5 years in Kyanamira sub county. Caretaker religion, education, household income, knowledge and attitudes of the caretaker, health education and how they are treated by health workers were the main predictors of utilization of child health services. Kyanamira Sub County should work to raise awareness of the community on utilization of child health services, there should be continuous health education and health workers should treat the caretakers and children very well in raise the utilization of child health services.