

Introduction: This study is entitled “factors affecting older people from accessing health care services in Nabalanga Sub County”. Globally, there is an increasing number of old people who are unable to access health care both in the developed and developing countries. The Uganda Health Survey Report puts the number of old people unable to access health care at 4.5% and the number is projected to increase to 6.5% by 2020.

Objectives: The study aimed at identifying the factors affecting older people from accessing health care services, guided by the objectives of examining the socio economic factors, assessing health care system factors and examining the cultural factors affecting healthcare access among older people. Literature from different authors was reviewed to find the agreements and disagreements between authors.

Method: Using a descriptive and cross sectional study design and adopting a quantitative and quantitative research approaches, the study was able to seek views from 286 respondents although the researcher had initially targeted 375. Respondents were selected using cluster sampling and simple random techniques. Both primary and secondary data was used for purposes of getting the information needed in the study. To collect the necessary information, a research administered questionnaire was used after which data was cleaned, edited, coded and computed using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) to extract graphs, frequency tables and percentages.

Results: The study findings revealed that socio economic factors especially education and income level were predictors in the health seeking behavior among old people. Moreover, the study also revealed that health system factors such as long distance travelled to the health center, limited number of health facilities, drug stock outs, waiting time as well as quality of care, explained the variation in health care access among old people within the study area.

Furthermore, the study has revealed that several aspects of culture had an influence on the health care access among old people. These were cultural norms and customs as well as beliefs that older people firmly hold upon like some diseases are not medically treated but rather use of herbs for treating different diseases.

Conclusions: It can be concluded that the socio economic factors especially income levels and education are predictors of health care accessibility among older people. Also health system related factors like the distance of the health centers from the older peoples home, limited health facilities, drug stock outs and long ques while waiting for health services .And the cultural factors which are norms ,customs and beliefs which older people strongly hold to like belief in some herbs as the only treatment for a specific illnesses.

Recommendations: From these findings, the researcher recommended that the government should design a medical insurance scheme to cater for old people; the need for the government to set up more health centers especially in rural areas, also the government building homes that can accommodate older people who do not have care in their own homes as well as boosting old people's income through the "Boona bagagawale" scheme. The researcher also proposed that future researchers should conduct research on the factors influencing health-seeking behavior against non-communicable diseases among old people as well as exploring the factors responsible for variations in regional accessibility to health care.