

WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR MANAGEMENT OF HYPERTENSION AMONG PATIENTS IN A SOUTHWESTERN CITY OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Hypertension prevalence in Nigeria and among urban dwellers has been of concern, given the fact that almost a half of patients drop out entirely from treatment of hypertension within one year, because of personal cost and unwillingness to pay for health care service. Health program managers are in a dilemma of service delivery to low income clients and their willingness to pay. This study aims to determine the willingness of hypertensive patients to pay for medical treatment at comprehensive Health centers in the Osun central district of Osun State. The study area was the urban area of Osogbo town, Osun state, situated in the southwestern part of Nigeria. A cross sectional studies using semi-structured questionnaires were designed to access the willingness to pay of hypertensive patients visiting health care center within Osogbo town. The sampling method used was Multistage sampling technique. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 was employed for data analysis. Three hundred and forty-seven questionnaires were administered within Osogbo town, Osun State with a response rate of 97%. About 91.40% of the respondents earning a monthly income less than twenty thousand Naira (< ₦20, 000). The respondents were mainly Yoruba women, illiterate with regular medical center attendance. The alternative treatments used by the patients included Herbal drugs (26.08%), religious activities (34.78%), Nutritional diet (6.95%) and physical exercise (32.17%). Lack of funds to meet the treatment cost, socioeconomic status of the patients, Level of knowledge, Patient attitude towards orthodox medicine and preference for alternative means of treatments were factors affecting the willingness to pay. This study revealed the perception of patients on hypertension and its prevention through medication and regular visit of the medical adviser. Alternative methods of treatment like herbs and nutritional diet was not as prominent, when compared to religious activities. Almost all the respondents were willing to pay for their medical treatment. Financial status, knowledge of the disease and the availability of alternative and complementary drugs were factors that affect willingness to pay. The Government should therefore improve on medical service, financing and ensure availability of drugs to encourage patients' ability and willingness to pay for services received.

KEYWORDS: Hypertension, Willingness to Pay, Ability to Pay, Health Care Services, Complementary and Alternative Medicine