

Knowledge, Attitude, and Utilization of Primary Healthcare Services Among Family Members of Karu Local Government Area, Nasarawa State

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ABSTRACT

Primary Health Care (PHC) is globally acknowledged as a cornerstone for achieving equitable and effective health systems worldwide. It represents the first level of contact individuals, families, and communities have with the healthcare system and offers a broad range of promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative services. Introduced globally through the 1978 Alma-Ata Declaration, PHC was envisioned as a strategy to attain “Health for All” by the year 2000 through universal, community-based, and affordable health services. To assess the knowledge, attitude, and utilization of primary healthcare services among family members in Karu Local Government Area, Nasarawa State. This research is cross-sectional qualitative research which involves about 401 participants, a well-structured questionnaire was issued out and collected, analysis was done after data entry and cleaning was done using SPSS Version 26, Chart where used and test of relationship was done to determine the confidence interval and level of significance. The findings show that 62.3% of respondents had good knowledge of primary healthcare services, more than half of the respondents (55.5%) showed a positive attitude towards PHC services. When it comes to utilization 60.1% reported using a PHC facility in the past 12 months. The results shows that knowledge and socio-demographic has a relationship which insignificant while attitude and socio-demographic data shows a relationship in which only household income showed a statistically significant relationship ($p=0.015$). In conclusion, while general awareness of PHC services among community members is high, knowledge, attitude and utilization levels remain moderate. Many respondents have heard of PHC centers but do not fully understand their purpose as the first level of care. Attitudinal and behavioral outcomes are further influenced by barriers such as distance, long waiting times, inadequate facilities, and cultural beliefs. Although PHC centers are intended to serve as the cornerstone of Nigeria’s healthcare delivery system, these findings reveal persistent gaps in public perception, accessibility, and service quality across all regions.

