

Notifiable Disease Reporting among Physicians Practicing in Grenada

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Objective

The study was carried out to determine physicians' knowledge of notifiable reporting and to identify the barriers to reporting in Grenada.

Introduction

Despite the significance of disease reporting to any health system, Grenada like most countries struggle with underreporting of notifiable diseases by physicians. In order to improve the national disease surveillance system in Grenada, it is critical understand the reasons for any underreporting. The study was conducted to determine physicians' knowledge of notifiable reporting and to identify the barriers to reporting.

Methods

The Grenada Medical and Dental Council identified a total of 129 registered and practicing physicians. A cross-sectional study design was developed to obtain information from all registered and practicing physician. The survey tool included questions on demographics; training history and medical practice details, as well as knowledge, practice and barriers to reporting notifiable diseases. The survey was administered to physicians in both paper-based and electronic formats.

Results

To date only 13 surveys have been returned. Preliminary data show that 61.5% of respondents rated an "average" on their knowledge of which diseases are reportable and of those only 46 % knew where to obtain a list of notifiable diseases (NDs). Fifty three percent (53%) of respondents said that they have reported NDs to the relevant authorities in the past. Thirty eight percent (38.5%) believed it should be the responsibility of nurses to report NDs and 30.8% stated it should be the physician. The major barriers to reporting, identified by the respondents were being too busy, too much time required, and lack of infrastructure or reporting systems. When asked about ways to improve reporting, 38.5% identified improvements to the reporting form, and 30.8% identified education of physicians on reporting protocol and importance.

Conclusions

While this is still preliminary data, the majority of the physicians surveyed had some knowledge of reporting NDs. The barriers to reporting identified were being too busy and lack of infrastructure. Future improvements to the reporting system in Grenada should focus on making forms electronic and less lengthy, and on educating physicians on the importance and protocol of reporting NDs.

Keywords

Low Resource Country; Grenada; Disease Notification; Knowledge and Practice; Barriers

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