

Study of Morbidity patterns and utilization of Out Patients Services in a defined area of Kalutara District.

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The general objective being to study morbidity patterns and utilization of out-patients services in selected government hospitals and from the community in a defined area in a district of Sri Lanka. The study also attempts to identify the factors associated with by passing phenomenon which has been growing (or even increasing) problem in the out-patients departments of larger government health institutions in Sri Lanka. *Finding* of the study show that the leading causes of morbidity of the community are diseases of respiratory system, infectious and parasitic diseases and injuries and poisoning. This is similar to the morbidity patterns observed in the hospital survey which shows that the community morbidity patterns are reflected at the out patients department of government health institutions. It is significant to note that injuries and poisoning ranked third in the disease conditions which may have been due to the urban nature of the study area. The study of utilization of out patients services indicate that the demand for private western medical practitioners seem to be increasing where as the demand for government western health sector is decreasing. The decline utilization of government health sectors needs further in-depth studies. The community study showed that the infants were mainly cared by the western private practitioners (85.2 per cent of those who fell ill) which may have been due to priority given by parents. The finding of the survey show that the problems of by-passing is significant. These institutional factors of the institution attended and institution by passed were identified to be the other significant contributory factors which need further research to study this phenomenon in depth.