

Adolescents' Views Towards Primary Care Doctors

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Objectives: To identify adolescents' view on primary care services and to find out the most common health problems they present within the primary care.

Design: Prospective questionnaire study.

Setting: Isa Town Health Center.

Method: The questionnaire was designed and piloted to a small group of adolescents, followed by a more widely distributed, amended questionnaire. The questionnaire survey was delivered to 444 adolescents between 11 and 19 years old attended Isa Town health center during the period of seven months from the first of August 2005 till the end of February 2006.

Result: Two hundred and eighty-nine (65.0%) of the adolescents think that the clinic in primary care is confidential. The majority of the adolescents 403 (90.7%) in both sexes agreed that the doctors respect them as patients. Three hundred and seventy-eight (85.1%) would like to be asked directly about their health problems. Boys and particularly older adolescents are more likely to prefer being alone without companion in the clinic. Two hundred and forty-nine (56.1%) of the adolescents prefer to be seen in general clinic instead of special clinic for adolescent; school commitments were the main obstacles hindering attendance to health center.

The most common cause of attendance in this study was upper respiratory tract infection 170(38.3%). Upper respiratory tract infection and skin problems are more common in females, while injuries and musculoskeletal problems are more in males.

Conclusion: Although this study shows that adolescents view primary care doctors as respectful and the clinics are confidential, they prefer to be asked directly about their health problem. Skills of communication with adolescents should be promoted among primary care doctors. This study gives indicators for the policy makers in the ministry of health for establishing evening clinic with all the privileges of morning clinic to avoid the obstacles of school commitments.

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