



Independent Project

Assessing Attitudes & Perceptions on the Usage of Native & Herbal Treatments for Malaria

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Background - Malaria

- Incidence
 - 16,067 cases per 100,000
- Vulnerable Populations
 - Children
 - #1 causes of death in Children under 5
 - Death rate: 18 - 30%
 - Pregnancy
 - Up to 11% of cases of maternal death are related to malaria
- Prevalent Strains
 - *Plasmodium Falciparum*
 - Most lethal strain

Ghana Health Service

- Malaria Prevention efforts
 - Contain and minimize the health impact of this disease process
- National Insecticide-Treated Net distribution campaign
- National Health Insurance Scheme
 - Full coverage
 - Treatment of malaria
 - Malaria prophylaxis in pregnancy
- Malaria Education campaign
 - Educate the population on how to prevent malaria
 - Recognize the symptoms of malaria earlier in the disease process.

Background – Native Medication

- Holistic discipline involving indigenous herbalism and African spirituality
- Belief that illness is not derived from chance occurrences, but through spiritual or social imbalance
- Diagnosis is reached through spiritual means
- Treatment mainly consists of an herbal remedy that has both healing abilities, and symbolic & spiritual significance.
- Under colonial rule, traditional healers were outlawed
 - Considered practitioners of witchcraft
- Use of traditional forms of medication are still quite prevalent in Ghanaian communities (MIH)
- Lack of published literature quantifying usage levels
- Examples
 - Fasting-Sacrifices-Prayer camps-Herbal Drinks & Rubs, Herbal Enemas

Purpose

- To determine community attitudes towards
 - Native healing Methods/ Herbal healing methods
 - Hospital Based Medication
- To assess preferences between native & herbal treatment and hospital based treatment
- To identify the main factors which have led to the preferences
- To assess effectiveness of past efforts to educate the community
- To identify areas of focus to better educate Ghanaian communities in the future

Methodology

- Cross sectional Study
- Questionnaire
 - 9 questions
 - Scale
 - Constant Sum scaling
 - Multiple Choice
- Target
 - Age: 18 or older
 - Contracted malaria at least once in the past
- Translators
 - 4 nurses fluent in English and Fanti

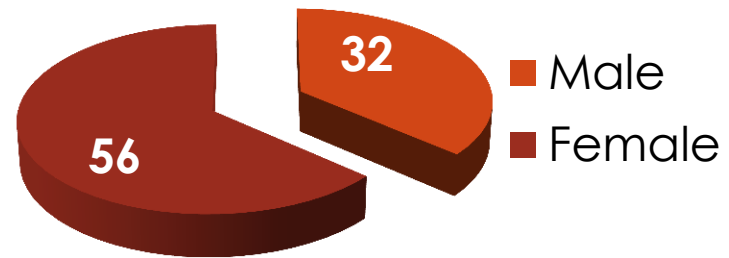
Community Survey

- Mode of Diagnosis
- Initial form of treatment
 - Native or Hospital Based
- Secondary form of Treatment
- Preferred form of Treatment
- Prominent factors affecting decision
- General perception of Native Medicine
- General perception of Hospital based Medicine

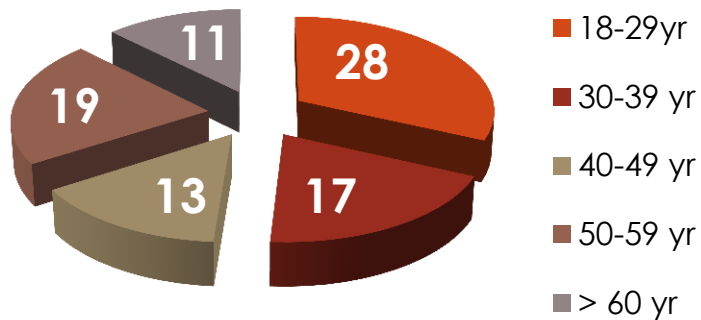
Results

- Sample size = 88

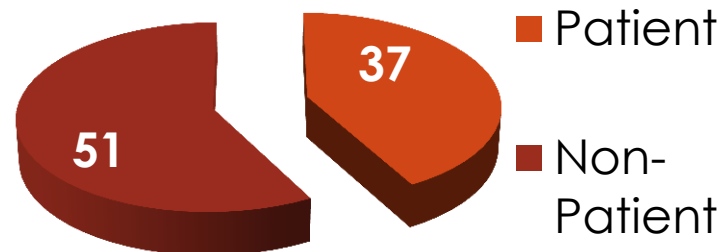
Gender Breakdown



Age Breakdown



Patient Breakdown



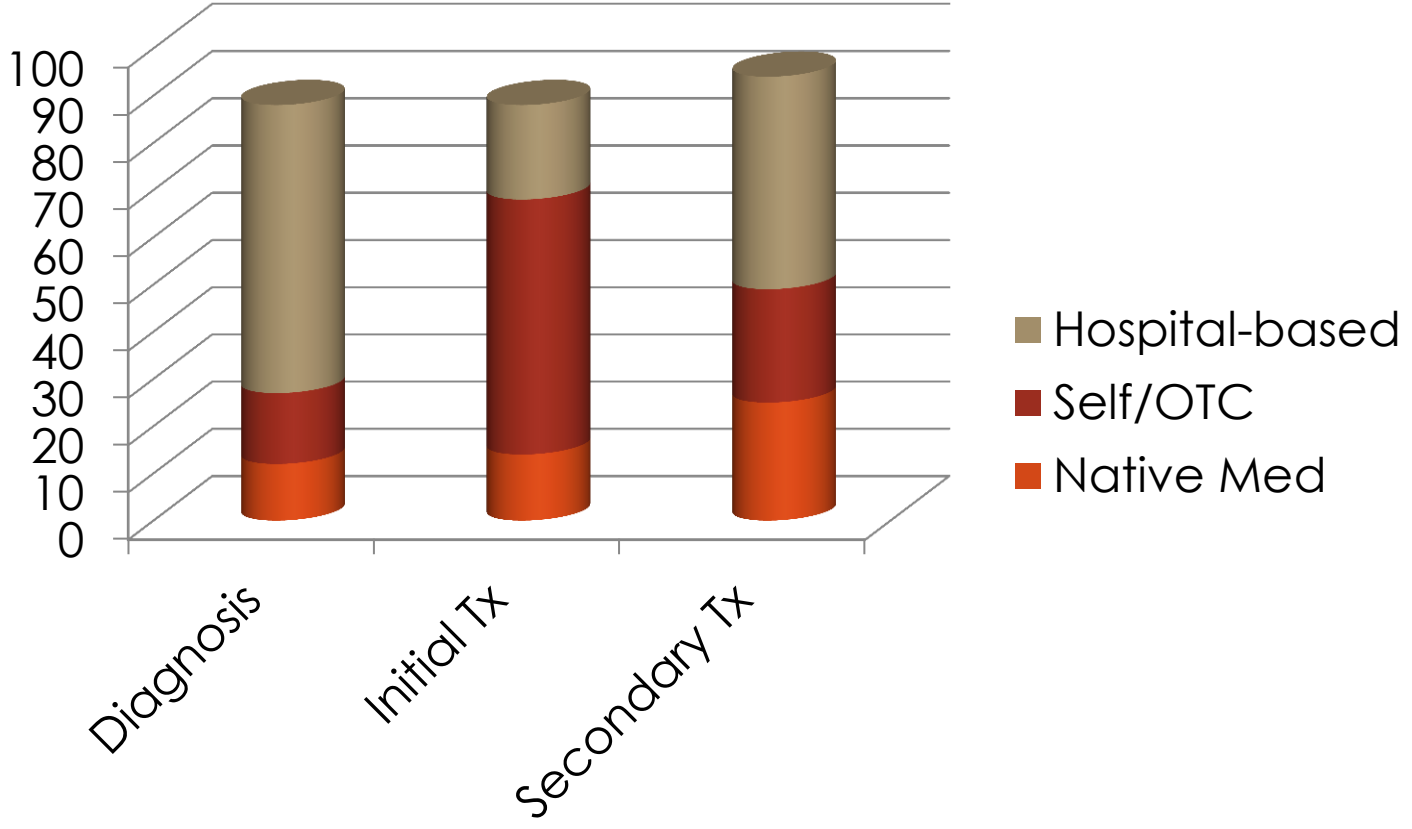
Results

Diagnosis		
Self Diagnosis	15	17.04%
Hospital based	61	69.32%
Native Based	12	13.64%

Initial Treatment Methods		
Store Bought	54	61.36%
Hosp. Based	20	22.73%
Native Based	14	15.91%

Secondary Treatment Methods		
Store bought	24	27.27%
Hosp. based	45	51.14%
Native Based	25	28.41%

Results



Results

Important Factors		
Cost	23	26.14%
Availability	11	12.5%
Accessibility	16	18.18%
Language	6	6.82%
Nat'l Health Ins	15	17.05%
Other	17*	19.32%

*Note: 12 of the 17 participants who answered "other" explained that lab tests establishing a definitive diagnosis was the most important factor in their decision making process

Results

- Perceived Effect of Treatment

	Negative	No Effect	Positive
Hosp based	4	7	77
Native based	22	27	39

- Patient Preference

	No. of people	Percentage
Hosp based	65	73.86%
Native based	23	26.14%

Interesting Findings

- Usage of native /herbal medications increased when used as a supplementary treatment
- Usage of Hospital services for diagnostic purposes only
- Costs as a rate limiting step
- Misperception among the elderly population?

Conclusion

- Primary reliance on hospital based diagnosis and treatment for malaria
- High incidence of native and herbal medication usage.
- Both hospital based treatments and native/herbal treatments for malaria have a positive perception.
- Costs are a pivotal factor when making the decision on where to seek malarial treatment
- The hospital is often trusted as a definitive means to receive a diagnosis of malaria

Limitations

- Language
 - Translation errors
 - Translation discrepancy
- Setting
 - May skew results

Thank You!

- Dr. Amekah
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- Mr. Jerry Nunoo
- St. Luke's Catholic Hospital Staff

- Dr. Hagan
- Axim Government Hospital Staff

- Dr. Collins Oduro-Boatey

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