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Prevalence And Factors Associated With Anaemia Among Children Aged 6 To 59 Months Attending Nakaseke General Hospital, Nakaseke District, Uganda

By

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ABSTRACT

Background: Anaemia is a common health problem in children and is one of the leading causes of death in low income countries. It is most common between the ages of 6 to 59 months where it is found to be associated with several factors.

Objective: This study aimed at determining the prevalence and factors associated with anaemia among children aged 6 to 59 months attending Nakaseke General Hospital.

Methods: This was a cross sectional study conducted in Nakaseke General Hospital. A data collection tool was used to record the key study variables with regard to anaemia prevalence and its associated factors. General and systemic examination as well as anthropometric measurements were done. Blood and stool samples were collected for analysis.

Results: A total of 384 children were enrolled from July to August 2013 of whom 52.1% were female. Out of the 384 children, 197 (51.3%) had anaemia. Of these 6.8% had severe anaemia, 21.9% moderate anaemia and 22.6% mild anaemia. Factors independently associated with anaemia on logistic regression included: age of the child less than 24 months [OR 2.2 (95%CI: 1.37 – 3.55)], a history of blood transfusion [OR 3.18 (95%CI: 1.20 – 8.39)], and maternal anaemia [OR 1.98 (95% CI: 1.18 – 3.3)]. Other significant associations were malaria infection [OR 2.62 (95%CI: 1.65 – 4.17)] and a positive HIV serological test [OR 5.33 (95%CI: 1.16 – 24.57)].

Conclusion: There is a high prevalence of anaemia among under 5s at Nakaseke general hospital. Children aged less than 24 months, those with malaria and those whose mothers had anaemia were more likely to be anaemic.

Recommendation: Oral iron supplementation to all children less than 60 months of age especially those under 24 months as well as women of child bearing age should be done. There is need to sensitize the community on the burden, implications and preventive strategies of anaemia among children.