

Clients' perceptions on the new policy for uncomplicated malaria case management and available alternative treatment options for childhood malaria in Kibaha district, Tanzania

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Community involvement is very important in assurance for the successful implementation of most health interventions. Clients were considered as a crucial part in the success of case management of uncomplicated childhood malaria following new malaria treatment policy, which introduced SP in place of chloroquine. The true profile of practices and clients' perceptions with regard to the current drug policy was not clearly known. Thus this study was conducted aiming at generating information on awareness, existing practices, clients' perceptions and available treatment options to the under five malaria case management in Kibaha district. Using cross sectional descriptive design, a total of 375 clients, mostly mothers of under five children diagnosed to have malaria were interviewed using structured questionnaire at health facilities, and four key informants were interviewed using a standardized semi structured guidelines. Majority of clients (84.0%) were aware of the new policy. The practices by both clients and health workers were inconsistent with the recommended policy. Clients were generally satisfied with use of SP though some are not, due to perceived bad adverse effects, resistance and lack of antipyretic activity. The study revealed that chloroquine is still preferred and used, as perceived efficacious and prescribed in public health facilities. There was a limited knowledge of SP names, which resulted into paradoxical concepts that ended into misuse of the drug.