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Utilisation of Youth Friendly Health Services in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

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Youth friendly services were introduced to help young people characterized by developmental activities address their issues. However, many factors have contributed to the lack of access to these services. This study was designed to assess the utilisation of youth friendly health services by young people in Port Harcourt and factors that affect utilisation.

The study was a cross sectional descriptive study, which made use of a multistage sampling using mixed method for data collection. A total of about 389 respondents and 4 managers of youth friendly centres were interviewed using a semi-structured interviewer assisted questionnaire and an in-depth interview guide respectively. The knowledge of young people about youth friendly services was categorised into low, medium and high on a 13 point scale of services with score of 0-5 classified as low, 6-8 as medium and 9-13 as high. Most respondents (69%) in the study were in-school. Of the 30.6% of the respondents that had knowledge of the services, 98.1% had low knowledge. Friends/family/contemporary and notice board were major sources of information about youth friendly centres. Eighty six percent had never visited a youth friendly centre while of the respondents who had utilised the services, most had utilised only once. Treatment of STIs was the most mentioned service utilised. Most respondents (41%) perceived the quality of services to be satisfactory. Finance among others were factors that affect utilisation of these services.

Effort should be made by stakeholders in adolescent health to increase awareness and strengthen existing youth friendly facilities.

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