

Description of Reported Foodborne Diseases in Selected Communities within the Greater Accra Region-Ghana: Epidemiological Review of Surveillance Data

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Abstract : Background: Acute gastroenteritis is one of the frequently reported Out-Patient Department (OPD) cases. However, the causative pathogens of these cases are rarely identified at the OPD due to delay in laboratory results or failure to obtain specimens before antibiotics is administered. Method: A retrospective review of surveillance data from the Adentan Municipality, Accra, Ghana that were recorded in the National foodborne disease surveillance system of Ghana, was conducted with the main aim of describing the epidemiology and food practice of cases reported from the Adentan Municipality. The study involved a retrospective review of surveillance data kept on patients who visited health facilities that are involved in foodborne disease surveillance in Ghana, from January 2015 to December 2016. Results: A total of 375 cases were reviewed and these were classified as viral hepatitis (hepatitis A and E), cholera (*Vibrio cholerae*), dysentery (*Shigella* sp.), typhoid fever (*Salmonella* sp.) or gastroenteritis. Cases recorded were all suspected case and the average cases recorded per week was 3. Typhoid fever and dysentery were the two main clinically diagnosed foodborne illnesses. The highest number of cases were observed during the late dry season (Feb to April), which marks the end of the dry season and the beginning of the rainy season. Relatively high number of cases was also observed during the late wet seasons (Jul to Oct) when the rainfall is the heaviest. Home-made food and street vended food were the major sources of suspected etiological food, recording 49.01% and 34.87% of the cases respectively. Conclusion: Majority of cases recorded were classified as gastroenteritis due to the absence of laboratory confirmation. Few cases were classified as typhoid fever and dysentery based on clinical symptoms presented. Patients reporting with foodborne diseases were found to consume home meal and street vended foods as their predominant source of food.

Keywords : accra, etiologic food, food poisoning, gastroenteritis, illness, surveillance

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