Health status of women prisoners. Factors affecting health, health services available in prison. Perception and utilization of health services by women prisoners

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ABSTRACT

Improving and maintaining the health of prison inmates during incarceration is the responsibility of the country, as they are the integral part of our community. Care of this high risk group during incarceration can substantially reduce the economic, social and health care burden. With this need a descriptive explorative study was undertaken to assess the health status of women prisoners, factors affecting health, health services available in prison, perception and utilization of health services by women prisoners at selected prisons.

Using descriptive explorative approach, study was conducted among 200 women prisoners who were imprisoned in prisons at Bangalore, Mysore, Belgaum, Puzhal, Vellore and Trichy. Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, data was collected by structured interview and the collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

In the physical health, maximum women prisoners 23.5% were in the score range of 40.01-50.00 and 39.5% in 20.01 – 30.00 in the mental health. Social factor was identified by 57% of them to affect their health. 33% of them were satisfied with the health service rendered to the fullest extent. Other than routine visit, 37.5% of the inmates visited prison health clinic 1-2 times in the past one month. Health service provided varied widely from prison to prison. There was statistically significant association found between physical health status with age and pre entry hospitalization, mental health status with occupation and marital status. Factors like physical, sanitation and spiritual factors found to have association with socio demographic variables of women prisoners. No association was found between satisfaction of women prisoners with their demographic variables but duration of imprisonment had significant association with health care visits of women prisoners.
Keywords: Health, Factors, Perception, Utilization, Health services and Women prisoners