

## **ANALYSIS OF PRESCRIPTIONS PER HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL**

### **4.1 Introduction**

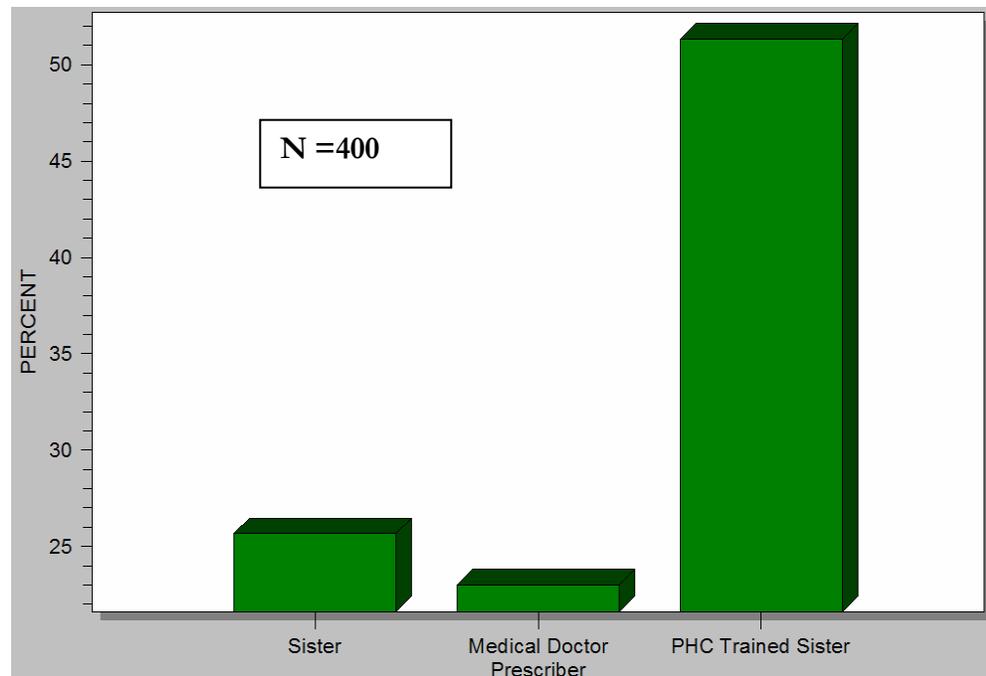
Clients at Primary Health Care (PHC) facilities are attended to by different categories of health care professionals. Most health care facilities are usually staffed by PHC trained professional sisters, some professional sisters, PHC trained doctor who visit the facilities on a sessional basis and in some instances there may be a number of enrolled nurses that work in the facility.

This chapter aimed at analyzing the proportion of clients attended by the different categories of health care professionals. Analysis of the findings in this section may give an indication of the distribution of clinical case loads within the informal settlements primary health care facilities.

## 4.2 Results

### 4.2.1 Analysis of the Proportions of Patients who Consulted Different Health Care Professionals

The results of the analysis of percentage of health care professionals attending to clients at the informal health care facilities are shown in figure 6 below.



**Figure 6. Proportion of Patients seen by Different Health Care Professionals**

Figure 6 shows the distribution of patients among health care professionals at all health facilities for the period under review. Careful

inspection of figure 4.1 shows that the majority of patients (51%) at the health care facilities studied were attended to by PHC trained professional sisters, this refers to registered nurses with extra training in primary health care. The proportion of patients who consulted professional sisters, this refers to registered nurses without extra primary health care training, was found to be 26%, while those who consulted a medical doctor were about 23%.

#### **4.2.2 Analysis of Prescribed Drugs by Different Health Care Professionals**

The frequency of drug prescription by health care professionals was determined using three marker drugs that were prescribed at high frequencies. The drugs used for the analysis were, panado (paracetamol), hydrochlorothiazide and Pen VK (Phenoxymethylpenicillin). Figure 7 shows the frequencies at which different drugs were prescribed by the different categories of health care professionals.

#### **4.2.2.1 Paracetamol**

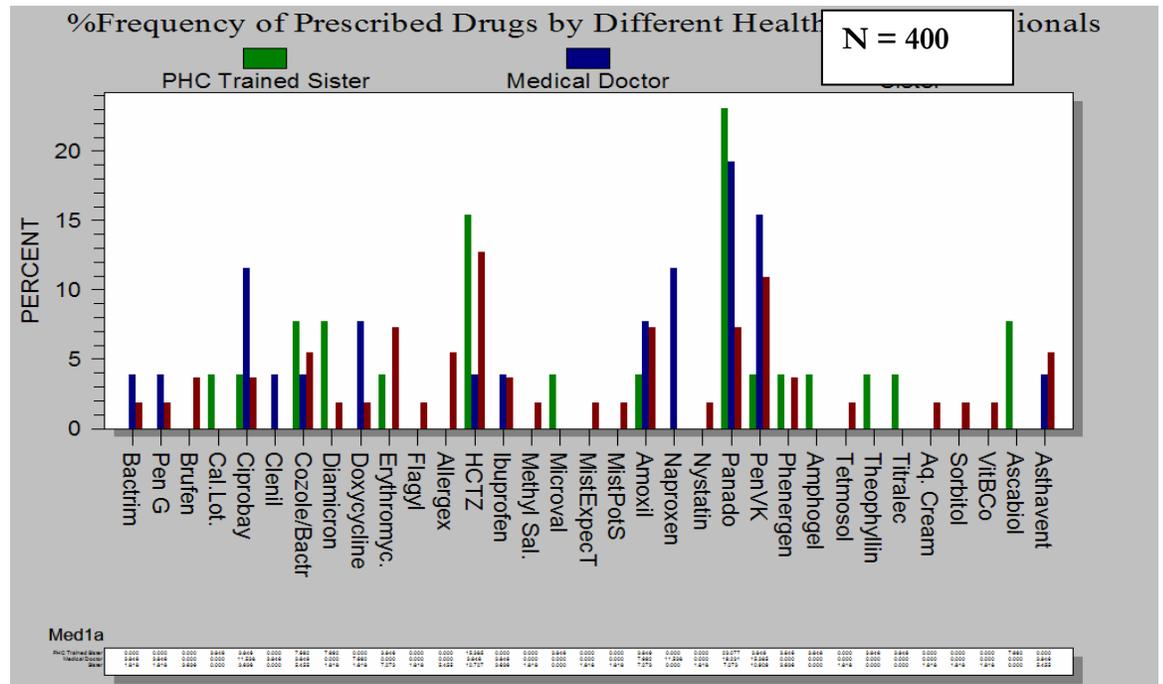
Paracetamol was the drug with highest prescription frequency. It was respectively prescribed at 23%, 19% and 7% by PHC trained sisters, medical doctors and professional sisters.

#### **4.2.2.2 Hydrochlorothiazide (HTCZ)**

Hydrochlorothiazide was prescribed at the rate of 15%, 12%, and 4% by PHC trained sisters, professional sisters and medical doctors, respectively.

### 4.2.2.3 Phenoxyethylpenicillin (Pen VK)

Phenoxyethylpenicillin was prescribed at the rate of 15% by medical doctors, 10% by professional sisters and 4% by PHC trained sisters.



**Figure 7. Frequencies of Drugs Prescribed by Different Health Care Professionals**

### 4.3 Discussion and Conclusions

The highest proportion of the clients attending informal settlements health care facilities were attended to by PHC trained sisters. Following

PHC trained sisters, the second largest proportion of clients were attended to by professional sisters while the lowest proportion of clients were attended to by medical doctors.

The results are consistent with the staffing norms of the primary health care facilities within the public health system. Most of the primary health care facilities within the public health sector would be staffed with professional sisters who may or may not be PHC trained. There may also be some doctors who visit the facilities on a sessional basis.

During the study period there were still some facilities with non PHC trained professional sisters. However, at present all the professional sisters at the four facilities studied have obtained some primary health care training. There are still some facilities without services of medical doctors. For example, the Davidsonville clinic still does not get services of medical doctors while the O R Tambo clinic may have up to five medical doctors at a time.