



AMERICAN NEPHROLOGY NURSES' ASSOCIATION
ANNA'S 44TH NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
APRIL 21-24, 2013
RIO ALL-SUITE HOTEL, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

**Hypertension in Haitian Immigrants Living in the Dominican Republic:
An Investigation of Rural Sugar Cane Communities**

Tamara M. Kear, PhD, RN, CNN, Villanova University, College of Nursing, Doylestown, PA

In the Caribbean, the prevalence of hypertension is estimated to affect 26-55% of the adult population (Pan American Health Organization, 2007). Due to social class inequities and health disparities, little evidence is available on the prevalence and management of hypertension in Haitian communities in rural areas of the Dominican Republic. This study was conducted to investigate the prevalence of hypertension in a sample of 176 Haitian migrants living in the sugar cane fields of the Dominican Republic. Barriers to hypertension management were explored through interviews with health promoters and the Haitian immigrants. Narrative analysis methods were used to analyze the transcripts. De-identified quantitative data was obtained from a standardized assessment tool and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The World Health Organization Core Blood Pressure Surveillance tool guided blood pressure monitoring and the Pan American Health Organization criteria defined hypertension. The prevalence of hypertension was consistent with data published by the Pan American Health Organization. Management of hypertension was suboptimal (28.41% met the defined criteria for hypertension; 19.88% of the population reporting taking anti-hypertensive medications). Barriers to hypertension management included the inability to obtain anti-hypertensive drugs, financial limitations, illiteracy, a diet high in sodium, lack of fresh food, and the intake of alcohol and nicotine. Findings from this study guided questions asked during subsequent interviews and ultimately resulted in the implementation of mobile hypertension clinics in the rural communities. Implications for practice include the role nephrology nurses play in screening for hypertension in underserved populations domestically and internationally, in an attempt to decrease the global burden of chronic kidney disease.

Abstract selected for presentation at ANNA's 44th National Symposium, Las Vegas, NV, 2013