

Anaemic burden and associated sociodemographic factors among patients referred to Haematology Unit, Teaching Hospital Jaffna

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Background and objective: Anaemia is a public health problem. This study aimed to describe the anaemic burden and associated socio-demographic factors among patients referred to the Hematology Unit, Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

Methods: This institution-based descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out among 637 patients referred to the Hematology Unit, Teaching Hospital Jaffna, between September 20th and October 30th, 2019. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results: In total, 81% had anaemia in the sample. Within groups, 78.6% of men, 89.1% of non-pregnant women, 67.6% of children (<20 years), and 73% of pregnant women were anaemic. Among anaemic women and men, 86.1 % and 74.7 %, respectively, were married. The majority of anaemic patients had an education level of Grade 6 to 10. Among anaemic men, 17.9% were labourers and 20.4% were farmers, while 87% of anaemic women were housewives. When considering aetiology of anaemia, iron deficiency anaemia (IDA) was the most common cause among children (74.6%), men (35.7%) and non-pregnant women (54.8%) in the 20-59 years age group (54.8%), and pregnant women (96.9%). Anaemia of chronic disease (ACD) was the most common aetiology among elderly men (61.3%) and women (66.4%) above 59 years of age.

Conclusion: Over three-fourths of the sample were anaemic, and the majority was moderately anaemic, mostly representing low socio-economic and education levels. Other than in elders, who mostly had ACD, the most common cause of anaemia in children, women, and men, was IDA.

Key words: Anaemia, Iron Deficiency Anaemia, Anaemia of Chronic Disease, Jaffna