

Knowledge, attitude, practice, anxiety and associated sociodemographic factors towards COVID-19 pandemic among selected categories of healthcare workers in base hospitals of Jaffna District

Asra A C F¹, Vithursana S¹, Timothy Y¹, Haleema N M N¹, Rasnayake R M S R K¹, Murali V², Sivathas S³

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna*

²*Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka*

³*Teaching Hospital, Jaffna*

Introduction and Objectives: Healthcare workers are a risk group for COVID-19 infection and related anxiety. They must have sufficient knowledge, positive attitudes, and adopt good practices to protect themselves from infection. Objective of this study was to describe the knowledge, attitude, and practice related to COVID-19 anxiety levels and associated sociodemographic factors among selected categories of healthcare workers in Base Hospitals of Jaffna District.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out among grade medical officers, nurses, and attendants in all four base hospitals in Jaffna District. Proportionate stratified sampling was used to select the sample. Data was collected by self-administered questionnaires among grade medical officers and nurses and through interviewer-administered questionnaires among attendants. The questionnaires consisted of questions about sociodemographic factors, knowledge, attitude, practice, and anxiety levels by Corona Anxiety Scale of healthcare workers towards COVID-19. Data was analyzed on SPSS (v21) using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Unpaired T test, chi square test and correlation were used for the analysis.

Results: In total, 356 healthcare workers aged between 25 and 54 years with a mean age of 38.8 ±7.04 years participated, including 77 (21.6%) grade medical officers, 162 (45.5%) nurses and 117 (32.9%) attendants. Among them, 38.2% (n=136) were males and 61.8% (n=220) were females. Majority used social media (85.7%, n=305) as their source of information on COVID19. Among the participants, grade medical officers had better knowledge (89.6%, n=69) than nurses (75.3%, n=122) and attendants (67.5%, n=79). Among the participants (92.2%, n=71) of the grade medical officers, 82.7% (n=134) of the nurses, 81.2% (n=95) of the attendants had a positive attitude. Precautionary measures were followed by the majority of the grade medical officers (85.7%, n=66), nurses (72.2%, n=117) and attendants (73.5%, n=86). Only 28.9% (n=105) of the workers had anxiety. Mean values of knowledge, attitude and anxiety scores differed significantly between grade medical officers and other groups. Attitude had correlation with age and with work experience. Practice was correlated with the place where they work. Anxiety had correlations with occupation and with the hospital they work. There was a significant association between the anxiety and practice (P=0.0001).

Conclusion: Most of the healthcare workers had good knowledge, positive attitude, good practice, and low level of anxiety. However, the progress on infection control and prevention of COVID-19 should be conducted to increase the attitude and practice further.

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Anxiety, COVID-19, Healthcare workers, Sri Lanka