OP 3

Are the health care workers geared to prevent H1N1 in the future?

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Objective: Our aim was to assess the knowledge on transmission and prevention of H1N1 influenza among health care workers who play a fundamental role in the community.

Methods: We selected Colombo South Teaching Hospital as the study setting to conduct a descriptive cross sectional study. The expected proportion of adequate knowledge was taken as 50% and at 0.05 precision with a non-respondent rate of 10% a study sample of 406 nurses was obtained. A self-administered questionnaire aided in seeking information on socio-demographic details, knowledge and attitude regarding H1N1. Significance level was set at $p < 0.05$ and tested using Chi-square.

Results: Majority knew nasal secretions 338(83.3%) and infective saliva 308(75.9%) as modes of transmission of H1N1 and their mean score was 8.37(S.D±1.53) out of 10. Higher percentages of the study sample knew about hand hygiene 375(92.4%), facial masks 391(96.3%), and patient isolation 344(84.5%) as effective means of prevention. A proportion of 80.5% (n=327) also knew that vaccine is a preventive method and their knowledge on its efficacy had a significant association with vaccination (p= 0.001). However 55.9% (n=227) have not been vaccinated due to side effects of the vaccine. The practices on both transmission of H1N1 (p=0.171) and prevention of H1N1 had no significant association with their actual knowledge (p=0.268).

Conclusion: Despite the knowledge their practice of prevention as health care workers was inadequate. Therefore the necessity arises to identify areas in which improvement can be made with the purpose of getting them efficiently and confidently involved in disease prevention.