

Knowledge attitude and practice of infection control in emergency department in tertiary care hospitals of eastern India

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Background:

Lack of knowledge about infection control practices have led to tragic consequences and probable legal hazards. With the advent of pandemic like COVID-19, practice of infection control measures have become essential. Staffs working in Emergency Medicine department are the first point of contact with the patients and precautionary measures are of utmost importance. The more skilled they are in infection control, the lesser are their chances to spread diseases unintentionally.

Objectives:

To evaluate the knowledge, attitude and practice of infection control practice using a semi-structured questionnaire in Emergency Medical Department of tertiary care hospitals in Bhubaneswar and also to enhance the hospital control programmes and make a positive impact in the health care sector.

Materials and Methods:

This cross-sectional study was conducted in the Emergency Medical Department of four tertiary care hospitals in Bhubaneswar from January 2019 to December 2020 among the staff working in the Emergency Department. A questionnaire was administered covering all aspects of knowledge, attitude and practice about infection control.

Results:

A total of 240 Healthcare workers from the emergency department of four regional hospitals participated in this study. Overall, the knowledge on infection prevention among HCWs was adequate (65%), HCW being aware of the term HAIs. From the data presented in the result section, it is clear that the majority of the participants, (30.5%) reported surgical wound infections as the most commonly seen HAIs in their hospital. Although urinary tract infections (27.1%), respiratory tract infections (15.3%), bloodstream infections (11.9%) were also reported. 41.6% participants reported that taking the white coat off while going to the canteen is unnecessary. Only 31.7% knew about using four colour-coded bins for BMW segregation. Majority (58.3%) participants showed a willingness to impart IPC training to the fellow HCWs while (52.5%) responded that HAI surveillance should be strictly implemented in the EMD settings. 60% participants agreed that IPC practices are often ignored in daily clinical practice and 63.3% of participants responded, practicing six steps of handwashing. In our study, the possible reasons among the HCWs can be that they are too busy or forget to wash hands before any procedure or physical examination.

Conclusion:

The study concluded a disparity in knowledge, attitude, and practices on IPC among HCWs in four regional hospitals in India's eastern part. The HCWs have poor to adequate knowledge, positive attitude and adequate to good practices regarding IPC in EMDs. The study was able to highlight gaps in specific aspects of knowledge, attitude and practice that should be focused in future awareness and educational campaigns. The study recommends the health authorities of the hospitals to promote all precautionary and preventive measures to be taken in the EMDs of the hospitals with a comprehensive training program consisting better structured targeting all HCWs including emergency medicine specialists, physicians, pharmacist and nurses, in order to have equilibrium clinical knowledge about IPC practices.