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Knowledge and attitudes towards management of pressure ulcers among caregivers of patients under treatment in surgical units in Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital (SJGH), Sri Lanka

Kumari RSDN^{1*}, Athapaththu NS¹, Navodani HBK¹, Halgahawaththa HROP¹, Ranasinghe AGKM¹, Senarath NSASN¹, Priyadarshani UGN²

¹Faculty of Nursing, KAATSU International University, Battramulla, Sri Lanka, ²Faculty of Nursing, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Background: Pressure ulcers are quite frequent among bedridden individuals. Caregivers are essential partners in the delivery of complex health care services and their awareness of pressure ulcer management is very important to improve health status of the patients.

Objective: To assess the knowledge and attitudes towards the management of pressure ulcers among caregivers of patients under treatment in surgical units in Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital (SJGH), Sri Lanka.

Methods & Materials: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 173 caregivers who have assisted immobilized patients in four randomly selected surgical wards in SJGH. Data were collected by using a self-developed, pre-tested interviewer-administered questionnaire. The study was ethically approved at ERC of SJGH. Descriptive and inferential statistics were performed by using SPSS version 23.

Results: The majority of caregivers were males (59.5%) and employed (85.6%). The age ranged between 23 and 77 years and more than half of caregivers were between 41-60 years. Forty point five percent of caregivers were educated up to Advanced Level. Nearly half of the participants had poor knowledge of the management of pressure ulcers. However, the majority were aware of positioning the patients in two hourly intervals, using air mattresses, and comfortable bed linens. Also, poor knowledge was reported on aspects such as the effect of nutritional status, hydration, mobilization techniques, and pressure point massage in the prevention of pressure ulcers. Also, 56.6% were having negative attitudes towards managing pressure ulcers. There was a significant association between age and attitudes towards pressure ulcer management ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Findings of this study emphasizes the importance of health education and awareness programs to enhance the knowledge and to motivate the caregivers to promote attitudes towards pressure ulcer management.