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Barriers for seeking health care for refractive errors among children aged 5-15 years in the Colombo District

Jayawardene DMS¹, Gunawardena NS², Dissanayake MM³

¹Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, ²World Health Organization Country Office for Sri Lanka, ³Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo

Objectives: The present study aimed to determine the barriers for seeking health care related to refractive errors among children aged 5-15 years attending state schools in the Colombo District.

Methods: Descriptive study using qualitative techniques was used in the state schools and MOH areas in Colombo District. Theoretical sampling was used to identify the categories of people to be sampled. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the schools and the MOH areas. Maximum variation sampling was used when selecting the parents within the school. In depth interviews were conducted among the health staff while focus group discussions were conducted among parents of children with refractive errors until theoretical saturation was achieved.

Results: Barriers for seeking health care related to refractive errors among parents were related to inadequate knowledge and defects in service provision, poor trust and confidence in the existing health care structure, and peer related factors of children. The themes that emerged among the health staff were related to defects in service provision, defects in follow up, capacity and specialized services, peer factors and shortage of health staff.

Conclusions: Barriers identified among parents and staff need to be addressed through schools and existing system of services in the health sector.

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* Not entered in online submission by mistake 1.12

Prevalence of occupational health problems among employees working at Karadiyana sanitary land filling waste management site in Sri Lanka

Akuressage KA¹, Dissanayake PH²

¹Department of Allied Health Sciences, ²Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Objectives: The principle objective of this study was to determine prevalence of occupational health problems among employees working at Karadiyana Sanitary land filling waste disposal site. Common types of occupational health problems, their associated factors and the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the employees were also evaluated.

Method: This was a descriptive cross-sectional study. All the employees (41) working at Karadiyana sanitary land filling waste management site were interviewed by using an interviewer administered questionnaire and underwent general examination. Data was analyzed by using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social sciences) version 15 software and significant relationship was measured by the P value of the Chi-Square Test.

Results: The response rate was 100%. The majority were males (N=36, 87.8%). The majority were educated up to Ordinary Level (N=24, 58.6%). Most of participants took alcohol (N=27, 65.9) and smoked (N=21, 51.2%). The common respiratory problems were cough (N=28, 68.3%) and shortness of breath (N=18, 43.9%). Gastritis (N=11, 26.8%) and diarrhea, vomiting (N=9, 22%) were the common gastrointestinal problems. Common musculoskeletal problems were backache (N=23, 56.1%) and knee pain (N=17, 41.6%). Most of the employees had normal Body Mass Index (BMI) (N=25, 61%). Considerable amount of participants had

diabetes mellitus (N=6, 14.6%) and hypertension (N=5, 12.2%). The majority used protective equipment such as boots (N=29, 70.7%), helmets (N=25, 61.0%), gloves (N=24, 58.5%) and masks (N=19, 46.3%). A considerable number of employees have got injured at the workplace at least once while working (N=15, 36.2%). The majority were vaccinated (N=25, 61%) against Hepatitis B and Tetanus. Most of the employees had participated at annual health clinics (N=30, 73.2%). The majority had their meals at the working place (N=37, 90.2%).

Conclusion: There is high prevalence of occupational health problems related to respiratory system, gastrointestinal system and musculoskeletal system among employees.

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Occupation related accidents and usage of safety equipment/methods among electrical linesmen in Colombo District of Ceylon Electricity Board

Anuradhika KRHS¹, Almeida IS², Angulugaha AGCM³, Gunathunga W⁴

¹Diabetes Research Unit, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, ²Negambo District General Hospital,

³De Soysa Hospital for Women, Colombo 8, ⁴Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo

Objective: The aim of our study was to describe occupation related accidents & usage of safety equipment/methods among linesmen of Ceylon Electricity Board in Colombo District.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was carried out in randomly selected study population consisting 120 linesmen of Colombo District. They were pre-educated on occupational accidents, common traumatic injuries and asked to bring any diagnosis cards if available. Self-administered questionnaire and checklist were distributed among them. Data were analyzed using SPSS statistics.

Results: This study has found 117 (97.5%) linesmen were aware of personal protective equipment (PPE) and all of the participants (n=120) were using PPE while working. Out of them, most of them (65.8%) were sharing PPE while working. Availability of PPE at workstation was 62.5%. The study has revealed that 44 (36.7%) linesmen had occupation related accidents and most of them were due to electrocution (n=23) while 16 workers had falls. The majority of the linesmen had fractures (n=12) and contusions (n=11). There was statistically significant association between availability of PPE at work and occupational accidents (p<0.05) and also between frequency of usage of safety boots and electrocutions (p<0.05).

Conclusion: Workers are sharing PPE among themselves rather than own a separate set. This could lead to more accidents if they follow the same routine in the future. Relevant authorities should ensure that linesmen are well educated regarding correct usage of PPE to protect linesmen from preventable occupational hazards.

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Are we ready for the dengue outbreaks in Anuradhapura District, in non-rainy seasons? A preliminary study

Gunathilaka MGRSS¹, Kularathna SAM², Rajapaksha RPVJ³, Ekanayake TD¹, Wamasekara YPJN¹, Muthugala MARV⁴

¹Faculty of Medicine and Allied Sciences, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, ²Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, ³Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences, University of Peradeniya, ⁴Teaching Hospital, Anuradhapura

Objectives: The objective of this study was to determine the relationship of dengue fever with average monthly rainfall, month of the year and geographical distribution in Anuradhapura District.