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**Factors associated with knowledge, attitudes, and practices in prevention of seasonal influenza and willingness to receive influenza vaccine among nurses in a tertiary care hospital in Colombo**

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**Background:** Influenza exhibits a rising trend in Sri Lanka whilst healthcare workers are a high risk group. As data available on prevention of influenza is limited in Sri Lanka, this study was conducted with an aim to influence future action.

**Objective:** To describe Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP's) in the prevention of seasonal influenza and willingness to accept an influenza vaccine (WAV) among nurses in Colombo South Teaching Hospital and determine factors associated with their KAP's and WAV.

**Method:** A cross-sectional study was conducted during February to March 2020, among 97 nurses selected by systematic random sampling, using an in-house developed interviewer-administered questionnaire with informed written consent. The questionnaire had 3 sections: sociodemographic data (n=10), KAP on prevention (n=29) and other factors affecting WAV (n=7). Chi-squared or Fisher's exact tests were used as appropriate for analysis. Maximum score for knowledge was 11, categorized as good ( $\geq 9$ ), average (7-8), poor ( $\leq 6$ ). Maximum score for practices was 4, categorized as good ( $\geq 3$ ), average (2), poor ( $\leq 1$ ). WAV was based on two criteria; either will not incur cost or upon physician's recommendation. This study was approved by the Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

**Results:** The majority had positive attitudes, average knowledge (48.5%) and practices (46.4%) in prevention. Seven were previously vaccinated. WAV was 90.7%, and was significantly associated (significance,  $p < 0.05$ ) with subjective attitude towards the vaccine ( $p = 0.01$ ) and its safety ( $p = 0.01$ ). Knowledge on vaccine availability had significant associations with knowledge acquired through undergraduate training ( $p = 0.01$ ) and practice of visiting a doctor when ill ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** The knowledge and practices in prevention of influenza was average and attitudes were positive. WAV was significantly high. Relationship between knowledge and visiting a doctor when ill, suggests prospective health promotion of the vaccine through physicians would be effective.