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Knowledge towards antibiotic use and antimicrobial resistance among outpatient department patients in General hospital, Kalutara, Sri Lanka

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Background: Antimicrobial resistance is a microorganism resistant to an antimicrobial drug. The emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistance is a growing problem worldwide including Sri Lanka.

Objective: The purpose of this study was to assess the knowledge towards antibiotic use and antimicrobial resistance among Out Patient Department (OPD) patients at General hospital Kalutara.

Method: A cross-sectional design was conducted. Data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire among a systematic random sampling of 382 patients. The questionnaire was adapted from valid surveys and was translated into Sinhala and back-translated to English for accuracy. The questionnaire was pre-tested with 20 OPD patients. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee, Post Graduate Institute of Sciences, University of Peradeniya. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0 version. Spearman correlation, Kruskal Wallis test and Mann Whitney U tests were used to analyze data.

Results: There were 120 males and 262 females (response rate=100%), with an age range of 18-79 years. The mean age of the sample was 43.7±5.5 years. Age was positively and significantly correlated with knowledge (Spearman's rho= 0.18, p=0.000). There were differences between knowledge with marital status (Kruskal Wallis test= 22.2, p=0.000), sex (Mann Whitney U= 13889, p=0.02), health care working status (Mann Whitney U= 6795, p=0.000), personal health status (Kruskal Wallis test = 12.9, p=0.000) and educational status (Kruskal Wallis test=32.8, p=0.000). Health workers were found to have significantly higher mean rank of knowledge and a higher score compared to non-health workers.

Conclusion: There are imperative areas of deficiency in patients' knowledge regards antibiotic use and antimicrobial resistance. Respondents displayed poor knowledge, notably in relation to the role of antibiotics.