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**Knowledge, attitudes, and perceived barriers for prevention of pressure ulcers among nurses in the National Hospital of Sri Lanka**

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**Background:** Pressure Ulcer (PU) prevention is an important aspect in any healthcare setting. Nurses are responsible for prevention of PU. They should have adequate knowledge and positive attitudes towards prevention of pressure ulcers for better patient outcomes.

**Objective:** The aim of this study was to describe knowledge, attitudes, and perceived barriers to prevent pressure ulcers, among nurses in the National Hospital of Sri Lanka.

**Method:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted using a convenience sample of 150 nurses from surgical, medical, orthopedic and neurology units. A pre-tested self-administered questionnaire was adapted from previous studies with expert opinion. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics through SPSS (version 21.0). Knowledge levels interpreted using McDonalds’s criteria: very low <60%, low 60% to 69.99%, Moderate 60% to 69.99%, high 80% to 89.99%, very high 90% to 100%.

**Results:** Mean age of participants was 32.7±5.3 years and the majority 73 (43.7%) had work experience of 6-10 years. Only 12 (8%) had received in-service training on PU prevention. Participants had low level of overall knowledge (65.5%). Most participants 138 (92%) knew about risk factors for the development of pressure ulcers. The majority showed positive attitudes towards priority for risk assessment and negative attitudes towards care for preventing pressure ulcers. Most participants 123 (82%) agreed that PUs can be avoided while 72 (48%) felt that PU prevention is time consuming. The majority 72(48%) felt that their clinical judgment is better than using pressure ulcer risk assessment. Barriers for prevention of pressure ulcers ranked as the most important were; work load 85 (57.2%), lack of time 66 (44%), lack of resources 76 (51%), and lack of guidelines 43(29%).

**Conclusion:** Participants’ overall knowledge was low, but the majority showed positive attitudes towards preventing pressure ulcers. The study highlights the need for in-service education for nurses on PU prevention while taking measures to minimize their barriers and enhance quality of care.