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Knowledge, attitude, practices and associated factors regarding the urine specimen collection, storage and transport among nursing staff of Colombo South Teaching Hospital

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Background: Laboratory services are the backbone of the healthcare sector. Inaccurate specimen collection, storage, and transport results in erroneous lab reports. It is important to identify the knowledge gaps and instil adequate training for nursing officers as they play a key role in specimen collection.

Objective: To describe knowledge, attitudes, practices, and associated factors regarding urine specimen collection, storage and transport among nursing officers at Colombo South Teaching Hospital (CSTH).

Method: A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out among 70 nurses who are working in general wards of CSTH. Pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire was used for data collection. A scoring system was used where 10 points were given for each correct response and overall median score was taken as the cut off to categorize as good and poor knowledge, practices, and favourable and unfavourable attitudes. Chi-squared or Fishers' exact tests were used and p value of <0.05 was considered as significant. Ethical approval was granted by Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura (CM/5/2019).

Results: Of the 70 participants 68 (97.1%) were females and 27 (38.6%) had attended to workshops on specimen collection. A percentage of 71.4 had overall good knowledge and good practices and 64.3% had favourable attitudes. Importantly only <50% had good knowledge on urine collection procedures with respect to different clinical conditions, and on specimen storage and transport. Significant associations were found between levels of knowledge and correct practices with workshop participation (p<0.05). Nurses with good knowledge had correct practices (p<0.05).

Conclusion: Although the majority of nurses had good knowledge and correct practices, there was a gap on knowledge on different procedures to be done in different clinical scenarios and correct methods of urine sample storage. Since good knowledge paved the way to correct practices, more in-service training programmes are suggested.