

Evaluating knowledge and practices of preventing catheter-associated urinary tract infections among doctors in Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya and medical students in the University of Peradeniya

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Introduction and Objectives: Catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTIs) represent the most common nosocomial infection and a major health concern due to the complications and frequent recurrence. This study evaluated knowledge and practices related to the prevention of CAUTIs among the doctors in Teaching Hospital Peradeniya and knowledge on the topic evaluated in three batches of students of Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.

Method: Cross-sectional study from June to August 2023 using a locally validated and pre-tested questionnaires.

Results: 90% of doctors who participated had knowledge scores above 50%. Males had higher knowledge mean compared to females though not significant ($p=0.33$). Doctors with more than 10 years of experience had the highest knowledge mean, while those with less than 5 years gave the lowest which showed significant difference ($p=0.002$). Compared to interneers and medical officers (MOs), post-graduate trainees showed the highest knowledge mean which was statistically significant ($p=0.004$). In assessing practices, 93% of doctors demonstrated positive practices, scoring above 50%. MOs showed the highest practice mean compared to post-graduate trainees or interneers with significant difference ($p=0.026$). Practice scores didn't demonstrate statistically significant difference when compared to gender and experience. There was no statistically significant correlation between knowledge scores and practice scores among doctors ($p=0.402$).

As students are not allowed to practice catheter insertion, only knowledge was assessed. Among 2016, 2017 and 2018 student batches, the 2017 batch showed highest knowledge mean (48.2), while the 2016 batch showed the lowest (46.6), but difference was not significant ($p=0.603$).

Conclusions: This study revealed gaps highlighting the need for targeted interventions to strengthen the practices, especially on indications for urinary-catheterisation, insertion, documentation and maintenance care bundles. This also highlights the need, for regular educational programs and annual competency assessments particularly for newly appointed doctors, to maintain quality and safe health care provision.

Keywords: Catheter-associated urinary tract infections–CAUTIs, knowledge, practices

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