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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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NEEDLE STICK INJURY AMONG NURSING OFFICERS ATTACHED TO SURGICAL AND MEDICAL WARDS OF TEACHING HOSPITAL BATTICALOA

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Background: Needle Stick Injuries (NSI) are one of the major occupational hazards among health care professionals. This study was carried out to find out the existing prevalence rates of the Needle Stick Injuries among nursing officers in Teaching Hospital Batticaloa and to assess the level of knowledge, attitude and practice on prevention and incident reporting.

Methods & Materials: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 90 nursing officers attached to medical and surgical wards in Teaching Hospital Batticaloa. Complete enumeration was used to select the sample. A validated self- administered questionnaire was used for data collection. Statistical software (SPSS 21.0) was used to analyze the data. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethical Review Committee, Faculty of Health - Care Sciences, Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

Results: Response rate was 93.7% and Prevalence of NSIs was 62.2%. 16.7% of NSIs seen in last twelve months. Medical wards accounted for 58.9% of the NSIs. Most of the injuries (46.4%) occurred during finger prick blood sampling. Needle recapping was seen in 50% of total population. All participants were immunized against Hepatitis B. 8.9% did not report the injury and the main reason was being busy.

Discussion & Conclusion: NSI's is an important occupational hazard among nursing officers in their daily ward work. Prevalence of NSIs is still high and ignorance and negligence are the main causes. Health education and in-service training should be mainly directed into practice to change the attitudes towards safe practices and more emphasis must be put on investigating methods and strategies to reduce NSI's. Further studies are needed after implementing education and training programs to assess the improvement. Also Hepatitis B immunization should be provided as early as possible.

Key words: *Needle stick injuries, Health care workers, Prevalence, Hepatitis B*