

OP 24: Awareness and attitudes among nursing officers of National Institute of Mental Health, regarding the COVID 19; Descriptive cross-sectional study

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Introduction: Individuals who seek inpatient hospital care due to COVID 19 infection are drastically increasing and nurses are crucial in caring for patients. Proper awareness and positive attitudes are the key pillars for pertinent caring of patients with COVID 19.

Objectives: The study aimed to evaluate the awareness and attitudes towards COVID- 19 among nursing officers of National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among randomly selected 201 nurses of NIMH. A pretested self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and Pearson chi-square test. Overall awareness was categorised using modified Bloom's cut-off point as good (80%-100%), moderate (50%-79%), and poor (< 50%).

Results: The majority were female (92%) with a mean age of 31±6 years. Of participants, 40% reported a history of exposure to COVID 19 while 27% had quarantine. Nearly half of the participants (52%) had moderate awareness with a mean of 70±14 (range 20-90). Referring the COVID 19 guidelines (p=0.001) and working experience (p=0.04) was significantly associated with the awareness. The mean value of the attitudes was 61±6 (range 46-80) and 63% (n=127) had a neutral attitude towards COVID-19. Working in a medical ward (p=0.01) or COVID suspected ward (p=0.005) and experience of quarantine (p=0.01) were significantly associated with attitudes.

Conclusions: Overall awareness and attitudes were at a moderate level among most. It is necessary to take measures to enhance the knowledge and attitudes towards COVID 19 among nurses.

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitudes, COVID- 19, Nursing officers