

## **The attitudes and practices, regarding pre hospital care and emergency medicine, among ambulance drivers and minor employees accompany patients in ambulances**

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### **Objective**

To describe, the attitudes and practices, regarding pre hospital care and emergency medicine among the ambulance drivers and minor employees.

### **Methods**

A descriptive cross sectional hospital based study was carried out at the National Hospital of Sri Lanka from 15<sup>th</sup> August to 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008. The staff arrived in 409 ambulances (from any part of the country), consisting of 335 drivers and 675 minor employees were recruited. All were given an interviewer administered questionnaire to assess attitudes and practices. Likert scale was used to assess the level of attitudes. Practices were self reported ones. The analysis was done by using chi square test.

### **Results**

Good attitudes towards, training needed in pre hospital care among drivers was 99.7% (n=334), low cost involved in adopting certain life saving measures, 50.4% (n=169) and positive outcome of pre hospital care in terms of survival, 4.8% (n=16). Among minor employees the respective figures were 96.8%(n=654), 36%(n=243) and 2.4%(n=16). Twenty four percent (n=164) of minor employees has had training in pre hospital care. Of them 84.8% (n=139) have used their knowledge to assist other ambulance staff in emergencies. Twenty three percent (n=95) of drivers wore seat belts and 6.4%(n=26) wore gloves. Among minor employees, 53%(n=360) used gloves, 45.2%(n=305) face masks, 5.9%(n=40) safety boots and 2.2% (n=15) safety caps. There is no statistically significant difference in attitudes of drivers and minor employees according to age, sex, education level, hospital they work, or training they had received.

### **Conclusion**

Attitudes towards training needed in pre hospital care were good, but with regard to low cost and positive outcome of pre hospital care, attitudes were relatively poor. The use of personal protective equipment during work was poor among all staff categories.