Knowledge and practices of hospital waste management among cleaners in private hospitals in Etiosa, Lagos

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ABSTRACT

Background: Safe hospital waste management requires knowledge, training and best practices. Compliance to standardised training and certification of cleaners in private hospitals in Lagos State is yet to be achieved.

Aims: This study aims to summarise knowledge of private hospital cleaners in Etiosa, Lagos on hospital waste management. It also aims to estimate relationships between training, knowledge and practice.

Methods: A cross sectional study using an interviewer-administered structured questionnaire was done. The questionnaire probed demographics, training, knowledge and practice. Target study population were private hospital cleaners in Etiosa local government area made up of Ajah, Lekki, Victoria Island and Ikoyi localities of Lagos state, Nigeria.

Results: Respondents displayed a poor knowledge of medical waste management. Respondents reported a poor knowledge of radioactive waste management; 83/98 (84.4%) gave incorrect responses. 88/98 (89.9%) could not provide the correct response to chemical waste management. Responders displayed better knowledge of infectious waste management; 57/98 (58.2%) gave the correct response. 39/98 (39.8%) responders gave incorrect responses; of these, 23 were trained while 16 did not receive training on waste management. 88/98 (89.8%) gave incorrect responses on management of sharps waste.

The influence of training on knowledge was not significant for most categories of waste. In terms of waste management practice, analysis of the association with training revealed that responders who were trained tend to always use gloves and apron; 66/79 (83.5%) compared to those who were not trained (7/19, 36.8%).
**Conclusions:** Hospital waste management in Lagos is yet to meet international standards. This research identified the quality of training health care workers received as a causal factor. Another contributor to this is the 'unharmonised' training by private hospital management and government of waste management. Collaboration between both parties is crucial for effective waste management training for cleaners in hospitals.