

ABSTRACT: POSTER PRESENTATION

## Assessment of Healthcare Waste Management Practices of Divisional Hospitals in Colombo District, Sri Lanka

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**Introduction:** Proper management of healthcare waste is essential as it poses a significant risk. With the increasing demand for health, the Healthcare Waste (HCW) generation has also increased. Although it is mandatory to adhere to the HCW management guidelines introduced by the Ministry of Health, many healthcare institutes have failed to implement the program successfully.

**Objective:** To assess the healthcare waste management practices of the divisional hospitals in the Colombo district

**Methodology:** A hospital-based descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in all nine divisional hospitals in the Regional Director of Health Services, Colombo. A validated survey questionnaire was used for data collection and data was analyzed by using SPSS version 28.

**Results:** Response rate 100%. Five (55%) hospitals had infection control committees and four (44%) conducted waste audits. Environmental Protection License (EPL) has been obtained by six (66%) hospitals and four (44%) of them have obtained the Scheduled Waste Management License (SWML). All hospitals (100%) practice the standard waste segregation method and uses pedal-operated bins to collect infectious waste. However, only four (44%) hospitals use puncture-proof containers to collect sharps. Only two (22%) hospitals have standard carts for the transport of waste. The majority of staff (66%) wear standard personal protective equipment. Only four (44%) hospitals have a waste-related incident reporting system. Eight (88%) hospitals have dedicated waste storage facilities for different types of waste. A majority (88%) dispose pharmaceutical waste appropriately and 77% sent laboratory wastes to septic tanks. The majority of HCWM staff was vaccinated against Hepatitis B. Only two (22%) of institutional heads were satisfied with the current practices in their hospitals while two (22%) were highly unsatisfied.

**Conclusion:** Healthcare waste management practices have to be further improved with an adequate supply of necessary equipment, training, and support from higher management.

**Keywords:** Health care waste management, Divisional Hospitals, Categories of waste

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