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**Awareness and Attitudes towards First Aid on Road Traffic Accident
among General Public in Gampaha District, Sri Lanka**

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Background: First aid is the immediate assessment and interventions when the most ideal treatment cannot be provided. The goals are to preserve life, alleviate suffering, prevent further illness or injury and promote recovery. The first to encounter the injured during an accident is the public. Therefore they must know how to provide first aid to minimize the burden of injury following road traffic accidents.

Objectives: To assess the awareness and attitudes on first aid in road traffic accidents among the general public.

Methods: A descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted using a convenient public sample (n=324) living in Gampaha district. Data were collected through a validated questionnaire. The self-administered questionnaire was circulated via social media platforms and analyzed using SPSS software.

Results: Most of the participants (54.4%) were between the ages 20 to 39 years and more than half of them (52.5%) were females. All participants were at least ordinary level qualified. Out of the respondents, 98.8% have heard about first aid and majority (96.9%) believed that first aid is important. Stop bleeding and maintenance of breathing were the priorities in saving the life of an injured according to 51.9% and 19.1%, respectively. According to 44.6% of the participants, no response when called/touched and no movements were the criteria to determine consciousness. Regarding attitudes, only 49.4% of the sample stated that they were willing to provide first aid. Another 21.6% explained that they lack confidence to provide first aid. Additionally, 61.7% pointed out that making a mistake is a concern that may prevent them from providing first aid. Nevertheless, 69.8% of the sample think that lay people should be trained in first aid and are willing to attend a training program.

Conclusions: The general public had satisfactory awareness but unclear attitudes towards the provision of first aid. Training programs must be conducted for the general public to educate about techniques which will be useful during an emergency.

Keywords: *Attitudes, Awareness, First aid, Road traffic accidents*