

PP 10

A Descriptive Cross-sectional Study of Practices Related to Usage of Skin Antiseptics among Healthcare Professionals in Sri Lanka

Kalingamudali Y.T.^{1#}, Munasinghe S.M.N.¹, Dewalegama S.D.¹, Jalini P.¹, Jayamaha A.², Jayaratna D.L.³

¹*Faculty of Health Science, KAATSU International University, Colombo, Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka*

²*Faculty of Nursing, KAATSU International University, Colombo, Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka*

³*Faculty of Science, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka*

#Corresponding author: yasheelee@kiu.ac.lk

Background: Skin is the largest organ in the body where microorganisms reside, potentially producing detrimental effects if introduced into the body through invasive medical procedures. Healthcare-associated infections due to poor hand hygiene have shown 19% prevalence in Sri Lanka. Therefore, proper asepsis is necessary to avoid infections before an invasive medical procedure.

Objectives: To assess practices on the use of skin antiseptics prior to an invasive medical procedure among healthcare professionals in all provinces of Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out among 210 healthcare professionals, including medical practitioners, surgeons, medical laboratory technicians and nurses from government and private hospitals and MOH offices. Data were collected using a pre-tested questionnaire in Google form. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics utilizing IBM SPSS version 25.0.

Results: Among the participants, 56.7% (n=119) were females, while the mean (SD) age was 40 (\pm 13). The majority of participants, 87.1% (n=183), used 70% alcohol as a skin antiseptic regularly, while 40% (n=84) agreed that chlorhexidine was a better antiseptic than other antiseptics commonly used in Sri Lanka. The use of chlorhexidine was extremely low. The motive for selecting skin antiseptics was stated as both availability and requirement by 32.9% (n=69). When the characteristics of antiseptics were assessed, 34.8% (n=73) stated that chlorhexidine was active against a wide range of organisms, 87.1% (n=183) stated that 70% alcohol had the fastest onset of action, and 70.5% (n=148) of participants stated that povidone-iodine was active against a broad range of organisms. According to 76.2% (n=160) of participants, a doctor wearing a sterile gown and gloves showed antiseptic procedure used in Sri Lanka is adequate and up to standard.

Conclusions: This study highlights the need to improve the existing skin antiseptic procedures to further reduce the rate of surgical site infections and other socio-economic burdens caused by infections.

Keywords: *Antiseptics, Chlorhexidine, Ethyl alcohol, Healthcare professionals, Povidone-iodine*