

## **Barriers related to delay in seeking medical advice among patients with chicken Pox: A hospital based study**

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Chickenpox is a common benign illness caused by varicella-zoster virus. Delayed initiation of treatment for chicken pox is known to delay the healing process and increase the days of hospitalization. The aim was to describe the barriers related to delay in seeking medical advice among patients with chicken pox admitted to the Isolation Unit of National Institute of Infectious Disease (NIID), Angoda. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at the Isolation Unit of NIID, Angoda. Two hundred and fifty adult patients were recruited to the study. Ethical approval was obtained from Ethics Review Committee of Lady Ridgeway Hospital prior to data collection. Interviewer administered questionnaire was used to collect data and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Majority of the participants 82.4% (n=206) believed that it is not necessary to seek medical treatments as chicken pox will cure spontaneously. One hundred eighty-five participants (74%) were influenced by others not to seek medical treatments. Sixty-five participants (26%) had not sought early medication due to difficulty in transportation while 61 (24.4%) had no help to seek medication. Forty-seven participants (18.8%) have not taken medical treatments since they wanted to hide their illness from others. Forty-four (17.6%) were alone at the home and 69 (27.6%) participants had economical difficulties for seeking early medication. Personal belief of the participants and influence by others play a major role in delay in seeking medical advice for chicken pox. An awareness programme is highly recommended to reduce these barriers and improve community awareness on Chicken pox and seeking early medical advice.

**Keywords:** *Barriers, delay in seeking medical advice, chicken pox*

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