

Knowledge, Attitudes and Its Associated Factors on the Provision of Psychological First Aid during Response to Disasters among Public Health Midwives in Colombo

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Abstract : Different kinds of distressing events happen in the world causing a wide range of reactions and feelings. Psychological first aid (PFA) is humane supportive response for suffering. All health workers especially PHMs who play a major role as first responders in a disaster should be able to provide basic PFA effectively. Aim of this study was to assess the knowledge, attitudes and associated factors on the provision of PFA among PHMs during disasters. A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out among 307 Public Health Midwives in Colombo RDHS area. In the study population, 86.6% (n=266) of the respondents were aware of the term "Psychological first aid" while 13.4% (n=41) were not aware. The total knowledge score was good in majority 85.4%(n=262) of the respondents while only 14.3%(n=45) had a poor knowledge on PFA. There was the statistically significant difference in relation to the level of education with the total knowledge score. Comprehensive desirable attitudes towards PFA was low (30.61%, n=94). According to the study, only a less than a quarter (21.82%, (n = 67)) of the study population had received training on PFA. More than half (56%, n=172) of the respondents had experience in responding to disasters. Conclusions and Recommendations: The overall knowledge and attitudes were found to be satisfactory. However, it is important to improve the knowledge level of the PHMs by providing training and workshops on PFA.

Keywords : disaster, humane supportive assistance, psychological first aid, public health midwives

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