

Attitudes and Knowledge of Dental Patients Towards Infection Control Measures in Kuwait University Dental Center

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Abstract : Objectives: The objective of this study is to determine and assess the level of knowledge and attitudes of dental patients attending Kuwait University Dental Clinics (KUDC) regarding the infection control protocols practiced in the clinic. The results would highlight the importance of conducting awareness campaigns in the community to promote good oral healthcare in Kuwait. Materials and Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive survey was carried out among dental patients attending KUDC. A structured questionnaire, in both Arabic and English languages, was used for data collection about the socio-demographic characteristics, knowledge about the dental cross-infection, and attitudes and self-reported practices regarding infection transmission and control in dentistry. Results: A response rate of 80% (202/250) was reported. 47% of respondents had poor knowledge about dental infection transmission, and only 19.8% had satisfactory knowledge. Female participants obtained a higher satisfactory score (14.3%) compared to males (5.5%). Patients with a university degree or higher education had a better level of knowledge compared to patients with a lower educational level ($p < 0.05$). The majority of participants agreed that the dentist should wear gloves (95.5%), masks (89.6%), safety glasses (70.3%), and gowns (84.7%). Many patients believed that the protection measures are mainly to stop the infection transmission from patient to patient via the dentist. Half of the participants would ask if the instruments are sterilized and might accept treatment from non-vaccinated dentists. Conclusions: Many dental patients attending KUDC have obtained poor knowledge scores regarding infection transmission in the dental clinic. The educational level was significantly associated with their level of knowledge. An overall positive attitude was reported regarding the infection control protocols practiced in the dental clinic. Raising awareness among dental patients about dental infection transmission and protective measures is of utmost importance.

Keywords : dental infection, knowledge, dental patients, infection control

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