

Knowledge, attitude, and practice of the community on Dengue infection in Gampaha District of Sri Lanka

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Dengue infection has become a major threat to public health in many urban and sub-urban areas of the country since 1989. However, dengue infection was first appeared in 1965. After the recent development this epidemic has infected large number of people and also it has become prevalent all over the country. As a result of this new development, many studies have been undertaken in this field but, most of them are related to therapeutical aspects in general. Though it has a direct link with the community there was limited number of studies done in this field. Therefore, this study is attempted to focus the community while examining their knowledge, attitude and practice on dengue infection.

The present study was done to describe and analyze the relative importance of ecological, biological and sociological factors associated with different levels of vector density and to identify appropriate intervention tools for the control of dengue in the district of Gampaha. The present study has been carried out in twenty selected dengue high and low transmission areas with two entomological cross-sectional surveillances during rainy season (June-August) and shortly after the rainy season (October-November), 2007 and a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey together with Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). Under the FGDs (80 groups represented 932 individuals) and KIIs (90 individuals) consulted. Apart from these interviews 2 case studies have been done. All FGDs have identified in three main clusters, urban, semi-urban, and rural and both male and female groups taken separately for the discussions.

This paper presents the findings of sociological aspect of dengue study. This is mainly a qualitative study. However, the study team has made an effort to quantify certain finding using SPSS. Using both qualitative and quantitative findings it can be stated that the community possesses substantially higher knowledge and attitude on dengue related facts. Especially, they know nature, method of breeding and spread of dengue infection. In addition, they are fully aware of the seriousness of the infection. They feel that the Local Authority does not have systematic way of garbage disposal and all related institutions are partly or fully politicized. Therefore, they argued that a participatory action plan would most appropriate since there is no responsibility taken by any segment of the society in disposing garbage at household level. They understand that the community should be more responsible and they can play a major role in this task.

It is revealed that the community in the Gampaha district has a sound knowledge and attitudes on dengue infection, but need improvement as to the systematic way of disposing garbage at household level and community level.

Key words: Dengue, Knowledge, Attitudes, Practice, Community participation

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