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**KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE TOWARDS
INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES AMONG STUDENTS OF THE
FACULTY OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES,
UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA**

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Health care facilities are ideal settings for transmission of infectious diseases. The associated morbidity, mortality, and related costs due to such hospital-acquired infections are a burden to society. A survey was carried out to assess the knowledge, attitude and practices towards infection control measures among the students in the newly established Faculty of Allied Health Sciences (FAHS) University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.

Students from the third and final years of the FAHS who had undergone clinical training and direct patient contact were selected (n=224). A pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire was used to gather information.

The results of the survey showed that the level of knowledge and practice of infection control measures were poor among students where only 30% of the respondents had sufficient knowledge and 42% had sufficient practice. Although the majority (65%) of students had good attitudes towards infection control measures, a greater compliance is needed. There was no significant difference in the knowledge, practice and attitude of students in the fourth and third years or between the male and female students (chi square test; $p > 0.05$), except that the male students had better practice than the female students (chi square test; $p < 0.05$). The fourth year students had a better practice than the third year students which was close to significant (chi square test; $p = 0.058$). There was no difference in the scores obtained by the students in different degree programs namely, nursing, physiotherapy, medical laboratory sciences, pharmacy and radiography (Logistic regression; $p > 0.05$). Although a higher percentage of students (97%) were vaccinated against blood and body fluid infections (e.g. hepatitis B), only 51% of the students were confident in providing services to patients having blood and body fluid infections. A large percentage of students (72%) claimed that they never received occupational training on infection control measures. Correlation analysis showed that students with higher knowledge about infection control measures had better practice and attitudes which reaffirm the importance of obtaining sufficient knowledge for compliance with infection control measures. These students were the second and the third graduating batches from the FAHS.

Rigorous hands-on training on infection control measures with a mandatory laboratory exam to assess the knowledge and practices of infection control measures prior to graduation is recommended.