

6<sup>th</sup> International Conference on

# Medical Informatics & Telemedicine

July 05-06, 2018 | Berlin, Germany

## INVESTIGATION OF CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO SCOMBROID FISH POISONING AMONG DAR ES SALAAM CITY RESIDENTS IN TANZANIA

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**Statement of the Problem:** Scombroid fish poisoning is a mild to moderate form of food poisoning caused by eating spoiled or bacterial contaminated fish after capture or during subsequent handling and storage. Its symptoms are similar to those of fish allergy though gives negative results to allergy tests. Because of that, most clinicians misdiagnose scombroid or histamine fish poisoning, and erroneously advice their patients never to eat the same fish again. The purpose of this study is to assess the contributing factors of scombroid fish poisoning among fish consumers and health care personnel residents in Dar es Salaam.

**Methodology & Theoretical Orientation:** A cross sectional study was carried out to investigate the factors associated with scombroid fish poisoning. Convenient sampling was used to select participants. Health providers included nurse midwifery, nurse officers, clinical officers, assistant medical officers, medical officers, physicians and 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year medical students who had finished internal medicine rotation and 3<sup>rd</sup> year nursing students. Fish consumers were mere residents. Findings: 49.6% of fish consumers and 60% of health care workers were aware of scombroid fish poisoning. Among those with awareness, 2.2% of fish consumers had average knowledge and the remainder had low knowledge, while 6.3% of health care workers had good knowledge, 42.9% and 50.8% had average to low knowledge, respectively. Mackerel was frequently listed among the scombroid fish associated with scombroid fish poisoning followed by tuna and king fish. Rashes (59%), diarrhoea (21.6%) and skin itching (19.4%) were the frequently mentioned symptoms by respondents.

**Conclusion & Significance:** Low awareness and knowledge are major contributing factors of scombroid fish poisoning among Dar es Salaam city residents. Aggressive health promotion interventions should be designed and implemented to increase awareness of histamine fish poisoning.