

4th International Conference on **Nursing & Healthcare**

October 05-07, 2015 San Francisco, USA

Injection practices among medical practitioners working at private clinics in Karachi: A cross sectional design

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Aims: This study assessed the practices, proportion of sharp injuries and associated risk factors among medical practitioners practicing in slum areas of Karachi, Pakistan.

Methods: A cross sectional study was conducted in slum area of Landhi Town Karachi. All medical practitioners running the private clinics in the given area were asked to participate in the study. Data was collected on self-administered pre-tested structured questionnaires. Proportion with percentage and 95% confidence interval was calculated for at least one sharp injury (SI) in the last one year. Predictors of sharp injuries were assessed using multiple logistic regressions.

Results: 327/397 (80%) private medical practitioners consented to participate. 277/317(87%) were males, and 40/317(13%) were female. Mean age was 38 (SD 11) years and mean work experience was 12 (SD 9) years. Proportion of at least one sharp injury in the last one year was 86/317(27%, 95% CI: 22.2-32). Almost 40/86(47%) of SI were caused by needle recapping. Less work experience, less than 14 years of schooling, more than 20 patients per day, administering more than 30 injections per day, reuse of syringe, and needle recapping after use were significantly associated with sharp injuries.

Conclusion: Injection practices are very poor among private medical practitioners in slum area of Karachi, and proportion of SIs is high. There is a risk of occupational transmission of blood borne infections among medical practitioners warranting an urgent need for launching awareness and training on standard precautions for private medical practitioners in slum area of Karachi.

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