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CHILD MALTREATMENT BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND BELIEFS AMONG SAUDI PEDIATRICIANS AND MEDICAL STUDENTS IN A TEACHING HOSPITAL SETTING

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Background: Child maltreatment is not included in many medical schools and paediatric residency curriculums, which might limit knowledge and spread misconceptions. Additionally, physicians might have a different attitude regarding reporting child abuse and neglect. In this study, we hypothesize that medical students and paediatric trainees have limited knowledge, oblivious attitude and misbeliefs regarding child maltreatment in comparison to experienced paediatricians. But, medical students and trainees might hold higher motives and willingness to learn about child maltreatment and their consequences.

Methods: A self-reported questionnaire was distributed after a pilot study to include paediatricians, paediatrics trainees and medical students in all main areas of paediatric services: paediatrics wards, paediatrics outpatient clinics, critical care and paediatrics emergency.

Results: In disregard to their level of training, Saudi medical students and physicians believed child maltreatment happens within the kingdom and quite common. They were familiar with child maltreatment definition, although only one third thought it was subject to cultural sensitivity. However, experienced physicians were more knowledgeable, especially about neglect. Moreover, female participants were more likely to report despite being more sceptical of readiness of the Saudi law system to deal with cases of maltreatment. In general, all participants requested and were enthusiastic to receive further training.

Conclusion: Although Saudi medical students, paediatrics trainees and paediatricians have good basic knowledge, positive attitude and willingness to learn, they need further training, especially in reporting CAN to provide a safe environment for children in the young nation.

Biography

Sara Ahmed AlSiddiqi is a fourth year medical student at King Saud University. She is the co-founder of Red Nose Child Buddies, an initiative to increase awareness towards child neglect and abuse among medical students. In 2015, the initiative won a first position award in the Seventh Scientific Symposium at King Saud University.

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