

Virology, Infectious Diseases and COVID-19

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Knowledge of chikungunya among newly admitted students at an offshore medical University in the Caribbean

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Abstract:

Chikungunya is a re-emerging viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes. Since there is no specific drug treatment or licensed vaccine, knowledge of this disease among people is very important for its prevention and control. This study aims to assess knowledge of chikungunya among new students admitted to an offshore Medical University located in a Caribbean region that has experienced outbreaks of the disease since 2013. A cross sectional study using purposive sampling was conducted among all newly admitted students for a period of one year (May 01, 2019 to April 30, 2020). The study employed a pilot tested questionnaire. The participants who were aware of the disease were included in the knowledge score analysis. Total percent knowledge score of each participant was calculated and the knowledge level of each participant was determined to be good (score $\geq 70\%$), fair (score 50.1-69.9%) or poor (score $\leq 50\%$) as per the previously published report. Out of 129 questionnaires distributed, a total of 102 responses were obtained (response rate: 79.06%). Among 102 participants, only 39 (38.2%) were aware of the disease with 30.77% having good knowledge, 28.21% fair knowledge and 41.03% poor knowledge of the disease. Thus, a large percentage of newly admitted students at the offshore Medical University did not have adequate knowledge of chikungunya. Therefore, the new students need education about the disease in a very early phase of their stay in this region and should be encouraged to practice recommended strategies to avoid mosquito bites and control of mosquito vectors.

Biography:

Hari Nepal is an Associate professor of microbiology. He completed his MD/ Residency training in Microbiology and Infectious Diseases at BP Koirala Institute of Health Sciences, Nepal. After residency, he joined Chitwan Medical College Teaching Hospital, a tertiary care hospital of central Nepal as an Assistant Professor of Microbiology and worked there until he joined Trinity School of Medicine in 2015. He is an experienced teacher in several teaching modalities. He serves as a manuscript reviewer for several journals. His research interests are antimicrobial resistance, infectious diseases, and medical education. He has more than 35 publications. He has received teaching awards from Medical and Biomedical students.