

Abstract

Background: The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 16 billion injections are administered in developing countries annually. Injection safety is therefore critical in preventing occupational exposure and infection from blood borne pathogens, hence prevention is a vital part of any comprehensive plan for protecting health workers, patients and maintaining a safe environment.

Objective: To determine the knowledge and practice of injection safety among clinical healthcare workers at the Garissa Provincial General Hospital.

Design: A cross-sectional descriptive study.

Setting: The Garissa provincial General Hospital from September 2011 to July 2012.

Results: Injection safety knowledge was high with a score of 12.65 (SD \pm 2.3) out of the total of 16 items. Appropriate injection safety practices were reported by most of the respondents. The level of knowledge was not significantly associated with respondents' demographic characteristics ($p > 0.05$), but was significantly associated with hand washing practice ($p < 0.05$). Inferences were made on an appropriate injection safety practices like non-recapping of needles, hand washing and proper waste management. Drug administration practice varied in the different departments ($p = 0.043$) and recapping of needles was significantly associated with training ($p = 0.047$), designation ($p = 0.02$) and area of deployment ($p = 0.017$).

Conclusion: Knowledge on injection safety was high but reported and observed practices were below the set standard. Risky practices such as recapping used syringes, re-use of disposable syringes and overfilling of sharp boxes were observed. There was insufficient provision of injection safety equipment, Poor waste handling and inadequate personal protective gear. Over prescription of unnecessary injections was widespread.