Abstracts from 2022 ACIPC International Conference

0. THE EXPERIENCE OF PARAMEDICS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
Ursula Howarth1,2, Peta-Anne Zimmerman3,4,5, Thea van de Mortel1, Nigel Barr2
1Queensland Ambulance Service, Brisbane, Australia
2School of Nursing and Midwifery, Griffith University, Gold Coast, Australia
3School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine, University of the Sunshine Coast, Sunshine Coast, Australia
4Collaborative for the Advancement for Infection Prevention and Control, Australia
5Menzies Health Institute, Australia

Background: The coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) has focused attention on healthcare workers’ concerns about working during a pandemic, however research on the topic has primarily been conducted in hospitals, with limited research specifically on paramedic workforce. This study critically examines and synthesises what is known about paramedics’ experiences of barriers to, and enablers of, responding to suspected or known COVID-19 cases.

Methods: An integrative review of the literature was undertaken using articles found by a systematic search of four research databases. Inclusion criteria included paramedics or emergency medical technicians who had experience of barriers to, or enablers of, responding to patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. A quality assessment of included articles was conducted.

Results: Nine articles, reporting on studies conducted in eight countries, met the inclusion criteria. Barriers to caring for potential or actual COVID-19 cases included communication and poor leadership, fear of infection to self and family, frequent changes in guidelines and inconsistencies across agencies, stress/burnout, and concerns with personal protective equipment. Enablers included job security, perceived social support, solidarity with other paramedics, and use of modern technologies for communication.

Conclusions: While some of the findings parallel those reported by other research specifically on paramedic workforce, this study critically examines and synthesises what is known about paramedics’ experiences of barriers to, and enablers of, responding to COVID-19. A quality assessment of included articles was conducted.

9. EFFECT OF HAND HYGIENE AND GLOVE USE ON THE CLEANLINESS OF REUSABLE SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS
Roel Castillo1, Dayane Melo Costa1, Lilian Lopes2, Anaclara Tippie3, Karen Vickery1, Helen Hu1, Anand Deva1
1Sydney Adventist Hospital, Wahroonga, Australia
2Macquarie University, Macquarie University, Australia
3University of Golas, Brazil

Background: During functionality testing and packaging of reusable surgical instruments (RSI) for sterilization, instruments are frequently touched.

There is a lack of standards relating to hand hygiene frequency and the use of gloves in the sterilizing service unit packing area.

Aim: To determine the effect of hand hygiene and glove use on the maintenance of RSI cleanliness.

Methods: Following manual and automated cleaning, Halsted-mosquito forceps were assessed for adenosine triphosphate (ATP), protein and microbial contamination after handling with gloved and ungloved but washed hands using an ATP surface swab test, bicinchoninic acid assay, and standard culture plate/broth, respectively. Gram’s stain was used to classify the isolates. RSI contamination was assessed immediately following, and 1, 2, and 4 h after washing hands.

Findings: Packing instruments with hands that had been unwashed for 2 or 4 h resulted in a significant increase in contaminating ATP compared with all other treatment groups (P < 0.05). There was a significant correlation between the time since washing hands, the amount of ATP (r = 0.93; P < 0.001), and the microbial load (r = 0.83; P < 0.001) contaminating the forceps, where the longer the time the hands remained unwashed, the higher the contamination. Significantly more contaminating protein was found on forceps handled with ungloved hands that had not been washed for 2 or 4 h (P < 0.001).

Conclusion: Critical RSI inspection, assembling, lubricating and packing should be performed using either gloves or within one h of washing hands.

13. HAND HYGIENE: KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE AMONG FINAL YEAR MEDICAL AND FINAL YEAR NURSING STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF BUEA
Mekolle Keshia Ebude1, Mekolle Enongene Julius1, Ginyu Innocentia Kwal,a, Ndung Ako Forbinake1
1Universite Catholic d’Afrique Centrale, Cameroon
2Catholic Missionary Health Services, Cameroon
3Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Buea, Cameroon
4World Health Organization, Cameroon

Introduction: Effective hand hygiene (HH) is essential for reducing health care associated infections (HAI). However, compliance among trainee health care workers (HCW) to HH guidelines are reportedly poor. Our objective was to identify gaps in knowledge, attitudes and practices in HH, to improve existing training programs and enhance good clinical practice.

Methods: Self-administered questionnaire based cross sectional study was done comparing knowledge, attitudes, and practices between participant groups. Knowledge assessment was based on the HH knowledge questionnaire for HCWs from the WHO (2009). 12 item questions answered by Likert 5-scale spectrum were used to measure participants’ attitude and practice of HH. Data were entered using EpiData Version 3.1 (EpiData Association, Odense Denmark, 2008) and analyzed using SPSS standard version 21.0 (IBM Inc. 2012).

Results: More (p < 0.05) nursing students (82.8%) compared to medical students (60%) had received formal training in HH in the last three years. Overall, most participants (66.7%) had moderate knowledge, majority of which were nursing students; 86.2% versus 58.6%, yet medical students were (p < 0.05) more knowledgeable than nurses with 27.1% having good