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Knowledge and attitude towards cardiopulmonary resuscitation by non-medical staff at a medical school in Gauteng

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ABSTRACT

Background: Sudden cardiac arrest can occur unexpectedly to any person and at any place including at medical schools. Improved outcomes after cardiac arrest are dependent on the initiation of early first responder high quality cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and rapid defibrillation. There is a lack of data pertaining to the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of non-medical staff at medical schools regarding CPR.

Objective: To determine the knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of non-medical staff at a medical school in South Africa regarding CPR.

Methods: A paper-based questionnaire was administered to non-medical staff fulfilling inclusion criteria at the medical school. Data was collected between 01 August and 25 October 2020.

Results: The final study sample comprised of 150 participants. Of these, 68.7% were female, 72.7% were ≤ 40 years old, 41.3% had a postgraduate university degree, 48.0% had witnessed a medical emergency at the medical school premises and 30.7% had previously undertaken first aid or CPR training. The mean knowledge score was 4.4 ± 1.6 out of 12 with only 16.7% knowing what was the first thing to look out for during a medical emergency and 18.7% knowing the location of the automated external defibrillator. Most participants (90.7%) indicated that CPR training should be mandatory for all employees.

Conclusion: Non-medical staff surveyed displayed suboptimal knowledge but positive attitudes and perceptions towards CPR. Although this was a single centre study, these results can be used to motivate for CPR training of non-medical staff at all medical schools.

KEYWORDS

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation, CPR, Non-medical staff, medical school, CPR knowledge, CPR attitude, CPR perceptions.