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### Challenges facing school personnel facing in managing children with allergies: An observational study

**Introduction:** Although the incidence of food allergy in schools is increasingly rising, the core knowledge and management of allergies and anaphylaxis is still suboptimal. Studies have reported that 24% of children with history of anaphylaxis have their first episode at school. Schools face the combined challenge of maintaining safety of students and readiness for emergencies. Avoiding fatalities has been linked to rapid recognition of symptoms and prompt intervention with epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen®).

**Objectives:** To identify the challenges school personnel facing in managing children with allergy. To assess common types of allergies in school children and to test the effectiveness of the instructions received by school personnel on their knowledge outcomes.

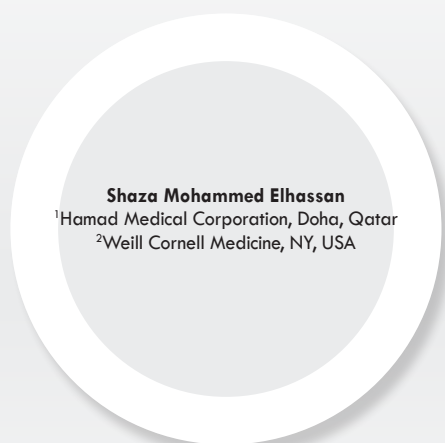
**Methods:** In this cross-sectional study in Doha, Qatar we used telephone-administered questionnaires for school personnel caring for children aged 1-14years old with a previous history of anaphylaxis who had been prescribed EpiPen®. We enrolled 128 schools but 50 schools were included in the analysis (figure 1).

**Results:** Challenges faced by school personnel were as follows, 60% had no emergency action plans in place, 40% no epinephrine stock, 24% did not receive instructions how to manage anaphylaxis, 16% were banned by school administration to give injections at schools, 10% was not informed by parents about their school children and 10% has an expired EpiPen®.

**Conclusion:** There were several notable challenges that school personnel had faced. Peanuts are the most common type of food allergy at schools. Overall schools that received instructions of how to treat anaphylaxis have better knowledge outcomes. Unless school personnel are empowered, management of allergies at schools will remain suboptimal.

#### Biography

Shaza Mohammed Elhassan is a Pediatric Attendant working at Sidra Children Hospital Doha Qatar. She has completed her graduation from Ahfad University, Khartoum Sudan, completed Pediatrics Residency at Woodhull Hospital, Brooklyn New York, American board certified in 2011 and completed Master's degree in Clinical Epidemiology and Health Services at Weil Cornell New York in May 2017. She is a registered Clinical Epidemiology a connoisseur of cohorts, trohocs, comorbidity; a Clinical Investigator and a member of the evaluative sciences faction at Weill Cornell Medicine. Her appointment as an Assistant Professor at Weill Cornell is in process. She has presented multiple abstracts at international conferences with published papers in peer-reviewed journals.



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