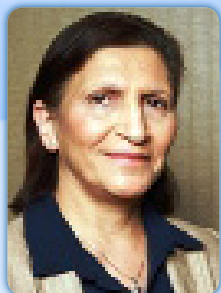


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Hana Kadhom

RCSI Medical University of Bahrain, Bahrain

Knowledge of HPV and awareness of risk factors for cervical cancer is low among Bahraini health science students

Globally, cervical cancer is a leading cause of death. It is fatal if untreated but preventable with the aid of screening and vaccination. Its cause is human papillomavirus (HPV) infection in more than 99% of cases which is spread sexually. Therefore knowledge of sexual behaviours and transmission are paramount for public awareness programs aimed at preventing this deadly disease. Female doctors and nurses need to have knowledge about HPV. This need is born out of their own needs, primarily as women and members of the public. Moreover, knowledge should also improve their effectiveness as professionals. This cross-sectional study assessed knowledge, attitudes and practices related to the cervical cancer among students in Bahrain using a self-administered questionnaire. 192 female medical (n=44) and nursing (n=148) students were surveyed in 2015. Only one third of participants (65/192) correctly identified that a virus, spread sexually, was a major cause of cervical cancer. There was a significant difference in the proportion of medical and nursing students that answered this question correctly; medical 37 (84.1%) and nursing 28 (18.9%). The odds ratio for nursing students answering this question incorrectly was 4.4 (CI 95% 3.1-6.4). Future female healthcare workers maybe expected to be well informed on this topic in both their professional and personal capacity but less than 1 in 5 of nursing students were aware of HPV in relation to cervical cancer. This suggests that there is a need to increase public awareness of HPV and risk factors for its spread in Bahrain.

Biography

Hana Kadhom has 34 years of experience in Nursing as a Practitioner and Educator. Her experience has been across the Middle East and UK. She has obtained her PhD from Hull University (UK) and she has Postgraduate Diploma from British Universities (in Nursing Education and Health and Safety). She is currently a Senior Lecturer and Director of Nursing Degree Bridging Program in Bahrain & Saudi Aramco.

hkadhom@rcsi-mub.com

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