

Knowledge and usage of Child Health and Development Records by mothers with a single child attending Teaching Hospitals near Colombo

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Introduction

The Child Health and Development Record (CHDR) is a book documenting an individual child's health history including growth, immunization, nutrition and developmental milestones from birth till 14 years of age and is an important tool in enhancing communication between health care workers and parents. Sri Lanka allocates a significant portion of its health budget to issue free CHDRs to all newborn children to improve their quality of life, and the outcome of this effort rests upon the knowledge and usage of it by all mothers which needs frequent monitoring to maintain a successful and productive programme.

Objectives

To assess the knowledge and usage of CHDRs by mothers attending Lady Ridgeway Hospital, Colombo, Colombo South Teaching Hospital, Kalubowila and Sri Jayewardenepura Teaching Hospital.

Methods

A descriptive, cross sectional study was carried out on 125 mothers, each having an only child aged less than 1 year with a government issued CHDR, in medical paediatric wards. They were selected according to the bed strengths of each hospital and ward. Interviewer based questionnaires and inspection of the CHDR was used to study the socio-demographic factors, general knowledge and usage, knowledge on growth, immunization, nutrition and development and sources of information inflow.

Results

When considering overall knowledge, 49.6% of mothers had a good level of general knowledge on the CHDR, but only 20% and 3.2% had a good knowledge on weight for age and height for age charts respectively. Knowledge on immunization was good among 87.2% and overall knowledge was high in 44% of mothers. When considering usage, majority (73.6%) showed a moderate level of usage while only 13.6% showed a good level of usage. Most mothers (65.6%) identified the Public Health Midwife as the main source of health education.

Conclusions

A majority of mothers showed a high level of knowledge on immunization, developmental milestones and general knowledge of the CHDR, but moderate and poor knowledge on weight for age and height for age charts respectively. The overall knowledge and usage of the CHDR was moderate. The main source of knowledge for mothers was the PHM but most had never received a separate education session on the CHDR.