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PARENTAL KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF THEIR CHILDREN'S CONGENITAL HEART DISEASES

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ABSTRACT

Congenital heart diseases (CHD) are the commonest congenital anomalies with serious complications that need more parental attention. Parental understanding of CHD is significantly affecting to improve compliance with medical care and improve the quality of life of the children. Hence aim of the study is to assess the parental knowledge and attitudes of their children's congenital heart diseases. In this quantitative descriptive study, the parents of 155 children with congenital heart disease, attending to the cardiology clinic at District General Hospital, Polonnaruwa were conveniently recruited. Data was collected by a pretested self-administered questionnaire. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of the same hospital. Data was analyzed by descriptive statistics using SPSS 22 version. According to the results, 68% of parents had male children with less than one year. Majority of the parents were aware that heart diseases were congenital with unknown etiology. Most known clinical presentation was rapid heart rate. Only 30% of all parents had heard of infective endocarditis (IE) as a side effect and they had less awareness about the association between respiratory tract infection and dental problems with IE. Only one-third of parents were known surgical intervention as a treatment method. Further, 78% of parents thought CHD is a fatal condition. Furthermore, 67% were worried about their children's illness while 39% were depressed. However, they believed that the child is safe after hospitalization. Overall no significant knowledge and attitudes regarding symptoms, side effects, and treatments of CHD were identified. Therefore, it is recommended to have more educational programs to promote better parental understanding of their children's heart diseases to enhance the quality of life of these children.

Keywords: Congenital Heart Diseases (CHD), parents, knowledge, attitudes