

SUMMARY

This descriptive study was carried out in the Divisional Director of Health area Dehiwela, during the months June to August in the year 2002. The objective of the study was to assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices on School Based Dengue Control Programme among year 10 students of selected schools in an urban Divisional Director of Health Services area.

This study covered ten schools each from categories of schools with and without a ongoing School Dengue Programme. Total of the 400 students in year 10 participated, with 200 students from each category of school. Self-administered questionnaire was used to assess the knowledge and attitudes. A checklist for assessment of practices in the school premises was used as study instruments.

It was found that mass media has played a major role as a source of information on dengue which enhanced the knowledge of the students in both categories. Role of Health Workers as a source of information was not prominent.

The study found that 95.5% of students in schools with school dengue programme had a overall good level of knowledge compared to 60.5% of students in schools without the programme. There were statistically significant difference ($P < 0.001$) in knowledge in areas such as identification of clinical signs and symptoms, complications and knowledge on exposure where the former had a good level of knowledge compared to the latter.

The higher mean scores were obtained by students in schools with School Dengue Programme (80.4%) and School Health Clubs (77%), where as those without these it was 69.6% and 71.8% respectively.

Results revealed that the majority of students in schools with an on going school dengue programme had desirable positive attitudes compared to the students in schools without school dengue control programme, in terms of responsibility, participation, period of control activities and usefulness of the programme. Most the students in both categories were of the opinion that dengue is a public health problem; control and prevention activities to be carried through out the year, at all the places with the responsibility of all concerned institutions, departments and, public. However, there was a statistically significant difference ($P < 0.001$) between these two categories with respect to certain component of the programme, such as student participation, responsibility and the usefulness.

The dengue control practices in the school premises were generally satisfactory in schools with an ongoing school dengue control programme. It was found that in few schools even though there was a dengue control programme the mosquito control practices were poor. Plastic containers particularly polythine and shopping bags (35.8%) and yoghurt cups (21.5%) acted as the main potential mosquito breeding sites in all the schools under the study.