

## **ABSTRACT**

### ***Introduction:***

Carcinoma of the cervix is the second commonest cancer in female in Sri-lanka. Incidence is about 6-6.5 per 100,000. This figure may be higher because of our reporting system is poor.<sup>1</sup>

Carcinoma of the cervix is the fifth most common cancer in woman world wide with approximately 471000 new cases diagnosed each year. It's sobering to think that a woman dies of cervical cancer approximately every two minutes.

Lack of awareness and knowledge is a major factor in women with cervical cancer presenting for medical treatment late.

### ***OBJECTIVES:***

To assess the knowledge and awareness of cervical cancer among women.

### ***SETTING, SUBJECTS, AND METHOD:***

Total number of 247 women who attended the MOH clinic of Dehiwela and Mahargama during Jan, Feb & March 2010 were administered a pre tested structured questionnaire.

### ***RESULTS:-***

The knowledge of identification of cervix is very good (90%), and their awareness that they might get cervical cancer is also very good (83%). Almost all have received the message of screening test of the cancer (98%). Only 88(36%) women knew that early marriage was a risk factor while 107 women (43%) knew that multiple sexual partners were a risk factor for cervical cancer. Only 156(63%) women knew that post coital bleeding might be a symptom of cervical cancer. 150 (61%) women knew about the cervical smear. Approximately, 26% of women express of fear for Pap test.

### ***Conclusion:***

The knowledge and awareness of cervical cancer among women attending the clinic is good, but they have many obstacles to come for the screening clinic. It should be explained to the women by health care workers mainly by public health midwives, Public health nurse(PHN), Medical Officer of health(MOH), General Practitioner (GP), as they are involving primary health care work and close contact with women.

### ***Key words:***

Cervical carcinoma, Pap smear screening, Knowledge & awareness