

Abstract

Objectives: The knowledge and practices of officers at Sri Lanka's main point of entry (PoE) towards the prevention and control of pandemic influenza were examined through this descriptive cross sectional study.

Methods: The study was carried out at the Bandaranaike international airport using a self-administered questionnaire including questions on socio-demographic characteristics, knowledge and practices of officers who were actively in contact with passengers.

Results: Completed questionnaires were returned by 193(91%) of the officers. 93.8% of the officers involved in the control and prevention of influenza at the BIA were non-medical personnel. The overall scores of those who had achieved more than 50% marks in knowledge and practices were 44% and 94.3% respectively. A majority of 88.6% had not received training in the handling of pandemic influenza, and a statistically significant association was seen between the knowledge of officers and the previous training they had received. A discrepancy between the knowledge of medical and non-medical officers was also noted.

Conclusions: The officers scored better in the total scores for practices than for knowledge. A significant association was found between the knowledge of officers and previous training prompting the need for regular training among the officers involved in the control and prevention of pandemic influenza at Sri Lanka's main PoE.