

# Knowledge on Disaster Preparedness and Associated Work Related Factors among Allied Health Professionals at Teaching Hospital, Jaffna

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Sri Lankans have faced major natural hazards from time to time. Though disasters create a heavy physical and psychological burden for the members of the healthcare team, their preparedness to meet the disaster is of utmost important as they are in the frontline of disaster management. The purpose of this study was to assess the level of knowledge on disaster preparedness and associated work-related among allied health professionals at Teaching Hospital, Jaffna. A descriptive cross-sectional study was done with 300 allied health professionals using stratified random sampling method. A multi-sectional self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. Correlation analysis and independent sample t-test and ANOVA were performed to identify associated factors. The mean age of participants was 34.5(SD±8.031) years. More than half of the participants were Nurses (n=209, 69.7%). The following work-related factors were statistically significant on knowledge of disaster preparedness among allied health professionals. Travelling distance from residence positively correlated with knowledge on disaster preparedness  $r(300) = 0.123$ ,  $p = 0.033$ . Educational status, occupation and professional experiences were statistically significant associated factors for knowledge on disaster preparedness ( $p < 0.001$ ). There is a significant gap between the knowledge level on disaster and current needs of disaster preparedness among allied health professionals. They had limited opportunities for training. Especially nurses had such practice than other allied health professionals. Therefore, training should be provided focusing on the specific gaps identified. Disaster preparedness should be rehearsed possibly through training and simulation exercises because training and education in disaster preparedness are considered as the back bone of disaster management.

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