

Oral presentations  
Theme 1: Mothers and Children

OP1

**Knowledge and attitudes towards adverse events following immunization (AEFI) and associated sociodemographic factors among mothers with young children in the paediatric wards of Teaching Hospital Jaffna**

A.J.M. Jaskhan<sup>1</sup>, M.A.M. Saeeth<sup>1</sup>, K. Boshakanth<sup>1</sup>, P.A.D. Coonghe<sup>2</sup>, U. Nirubaa<sup>3,4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Community and Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna*

<sup>3</sup>*Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna*

<sup>4</sup>*Teaching Hospital Jaffna*

**Background and objective:** All vaccines in the National Immunization Schedule are safe and effective, but adverse events may occur. It is important that parents have good knowledge and favourable attitudes towards immunization. This study aims to assess knowledge and attitude towards AEFI and their association with sociodemographic factors among mothers with young children in the paediatric wards of Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

**Methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 410 mothers having children below 5 years, selected by systematic sampling, from the paediatric wards of Teaching Hospital Jaffna. Period of research was from December 2018 to February 2020. Data were collected using an interviewer-administered questionnaire and analyzed using the chi-square test. Knowledge was categorized into good, moderate, and poor according to a scoring system. Attitudes were measured by using a Likert scale.

**Results:** Almost two-thirds of the sample (62%) had good knowledge on AEFI; a large majority were able to correctly identify symptoms of AEFI such as fever (99%), and swelling, redness and pain at the injection site (80.2%). Most mothers disagreed that they feared getting medical advice when their child experienced AEFI (78%); over 90% disagreed they would omit their child's next vaccination if an AEFI was experienced. A large majority (95.1%) agreed they would seek medical advice if their child had persistent fever. Knowledge was significantly associated with number of children ( $p=0.007$ ) and family income ( $p<0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** The majority of mothers visiting the paediatric clinics of THJ know about AEFI. Number of children and family income influence knowledge on AEFI, but not attitude.

**Keywords:** AEFI, Expanded Programme on Immunization, Knowledge, Attitudes, Mothers