

Knowledge and Practices Towards Medical Waste Management Among Health Workers in Lango Sub Region: A Case of Lira District in Northern Uganda

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ABSTRACT

Background: Healthcare waste refers to hazardous materials generated from medical activities, including sharps, chemicals and pharmaceuticals. In Uganda, 60%–80% of healthcare care facilities do not comply with appropriate healthcare waste management protocols. In Lira district healthcare workers, patients and the public are directly affected by improper medical waste management which leads to contamination and disease blow-out.

Study Aim and Objectives: This study assessed the level of knowledge and medical waste management practices among healthcare workers in Lango sub region using Lira district as a case study. Specifically, the study assessed the level of Knowledge of healthcare workers on medical waste management within different health facilities, described the practices of health care workers towards medical waste management within different health facilities and to established factors associated with medical waste management practices among health workers within different health facilities in lira district.

Methods: This cross-sectional study surveyed 145 health workers from Health Centres II, III and IV in Lira district using structured questionnaires. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics to summarize findings and binary logistic regression to identify factors associated with good medical waste management practices at bivariate and multivariate levels.

Results: The study revealed that only 5.52% of healthcare workers practiced proper medical waste disposal using incineration. Knowledge and practice levels varied, with only 21.38% of participants always recording waste disposal. Significant associations were found between proper waste disposal and factors such as age, gender, education level and labelling practices.

Conclusion: Proper medical waste disposal practices remain low among healthcare workers in Lira district despite moderate knowledge levels. Factors such as younger age, male gender and lower education levels negatively influenced compliance with medical waste management.

Recommendations: Strengthen training and capacity building by the District Health Office through regular and targeted training sessions focused on medical waste management for all cadres of health workers.

Keywords: Knowledge, Practices, Towards, Medical Waste Management, Health Workers, Lango Sub Region, Lira District, and Northern Uganda