

Vaccine Hesitancy and Concerns about Covid-19 Vaccine among HealthCare Workers in Teaching Hospital Rathnapura

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The global health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact. The success of large-scale COVID-19 vaccination efforts has been hindered by the reluctance of certain populations to get vaccinated. Given that healthcare professionals play a crucial role in advising and administering vaccines and can potentially spread infections within healthcare settings, it is essential to prioritize COVID-19 vaccine acceptance among healthcare workers. To achieve this, understanding the reasons behind their hesitancy is imperative. A cross-sectional study was performed involving 400 Health Care Workers (HCW) in the Teaching Hospital Rathnapura using questionnaire-based assessment in October 2022. Univariate and multivariate analyses were performed to identify factors associated with vaccine hesitancy using IBM-SPSS version 29. 94.5% of the sample had taken at least one dose of vaccine. 5.5% of participants have completely rejected taking the vaccine. While 275 (68.8%) had completed taking all 3 doses, 100 (25.0%) had only 2 doses and 3 (0.8%) had taken only one dose. Vaccine hesitancy was associated with age (majority > 50 years); employment status and education level. Gender, ethnicity and religion did not have any association with vaccine hesitancy. The primary worry revolved around experiencing adverse reactions, while potential impacts on existing health conditions, fears of fertility issues, and uncertainty about long-term complications were also factors causing apprehension. Conversely, many individuals cited the desire to build herd immunity and safeguard both patients and their family members as the leading reasons for getting vaccinated. Notably, instances of health issues following the initial dose played a significant role in individuals missing their subsequent vaccine doses. COVID-19 vaccination has witnessed a substantial level of acceptance among healthcare workers (HCWs), but a significant portion of participants expressed apprehensions about their well-being. The study has highlighted specific reasons for hesitancy and prevalent concerns, which should be taken into account in future vaccination initiatives to enhance overall vaccine acceptance.

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