

PeMURS '26

PERADENIYA MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY MEDICINE
FACULTY OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA
JUNE 2, 2026

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



BATCH 20/21



PeMURS

Peradeniya Medical Undergraduate Research Symposium

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

MEMBERS OF THE STAFF

DEAN

Prof. Saman Nanayakkara

SYMPOSIUM CHAIRPERSON

Prof. Samidi Navaratna

SYMPOSIUM SECRETARY

Dr. Lakshika Pathirana

SYMPOSIUM TREASURER

Dr. S. Krishnapradeep

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Prof. Samidi Navaratna

Dr. Lakshika Pathirana

Dr. Nadarasa Ganashiam

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Editor

Prof. Samidi Navaratna

Editorial Board

Prof. Samath Dharmaratne

Prof. Sampath Tennakoon

Prof. Damitha Gunawardane

Dr. Kalyani Pethiyagoda

Dr. Jayantha Padmini

Dr. Inosha Alwis

Dr. Gayathri Aruppola

Dr. S. R. Waidyathileke

Dr. S. C. Manawaduge

Dr. Indeewari Ratnayake

Dr. M.R.H.R.R Hassen

MEDIA & IT COMMITTEE

Prof. Damitha Gunawardane

Dr. T. H. Hettiarachchi

LOGISTICS COMMITTEE

Prof. Samath Dharmaratne

Dr. S. D. Hettige

Miss Binushi Rathnayake

Miss Nishadhi Chandrasiri

FINANCE & REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

Dr. S. Krishnapradeep

Dr. W. T. D. Kularatne

Dr. H.M.D.N.R. Bandara

FOOD & BEVERAGE COMMITTEE

Prof. Sampath Thennakoon

Dr. Gayathri Aruppola

Dr. Damkith Kumaranathunga

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Prof. Samidi Navaratna

Prof. Samath Dharmaratne

Dr. S. Krishnapradeep

REVIEWER PANEL

Prof. Samidi Navaratna

Prof. Samath Dharmaratne

Prof. Sampath Tennakoon

Prof. Damitha Gunawardane

Dr. Kalyani Pethiyagoda

Dr. Inosha Alwis

Dr. Gayathri Aruppola

Dr. Ruvimal Bandara

STUDENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

STUDENT CHAIR

Mr. Minura Kulasekara	20/21
-----------------------	-------

STUDENT SECRETARY

Miss Themis Jinadasa	20/21
----------------------	-------

STUDENT TREASURER

Mr. Prabhath Weerasinghe	21/22
--------------------------	-------

STUDENT COMMITTEE CONVENERS

Mr. Disara Jayaratne	Scientific	21/22
Mr. Uditha Wijeratne	Scientific	21/22
Miss Numaya Ekanayake	Editorial	20/21
Mr. Malith Madurandika	Editorial	20/21
Mr. Radin Jayalath	Editorial	20/21
Mr. Senuranga Shanaka	Editorial	20/21
Mr. Hasala Karunadasa	Media & IT	20/21
Miss Mihashree Mahaulpotha	Logistics	20/21
Miss Prashani Fernando	Logistics	20/21
Mr. Vishwajith Gunarathna	Food & Beverages	20/21
Miss G.G. Binari N. Chamindi	Food & Beverages	20/21
Miss Dilini Bandaranayake	Finance and Registration	20/21
Miss Umayya Godakumbura	Social	21/22
Miss Hiruni Vithanage	Social	21/22

STUDENT SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Miss T.K.J.H. Gunasena	22/23	Miss. M.R.Z. Shahani	23/24
Mr. A.M. Munasinghe	22/23	Mr. D.M. Perera	24/25

STUDENT EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Miss N. Dharmaratne	21/22	Miss K.S. Costa	21/22
Miss M. Kavilashna	22/23	Miss F.I. Firouz	22/23
Miss T. D. Weerasinghe	23/24	Miss J.P. Dassanayake	23/24
Miss Y.N. Ranawaka	24/25	Miss T.S. Somarathna	24/25

STUDENT MEDIA & IT COMMITTEE

Miss S. Kavidha	21/22	Mr. C.Y. Dombepola	24/25
Miss M.N. Afka	21/22	Mr. A.H.H. Hewage	24/25
Mr. M. Weerawickrama	24/25	Mr. T. Kerath	24/25
Mr. I.M. Shifan	24/25	Mr. K.D.A.V. Yasith	23/24
Mr. M.I. Ramanayaka	23/24	Mr. V.K. Bandara	21/22
Miss S.S. Weerakoon	22/23		

STUDENT LOGISTICS COMMITTEE

Mr. Y.B. Walisundara	21/22	Miss.B.S.P. Jayarathna	21/22
Miss. S.S. Dissanayake	21/22	Mr. T.Y.M. Rupasinghe	21/22
Miss H. Dhanapala	21/22	Mr. M.S. Amarasinghe	22/23
Mr. K.P.G. Induwara	22/23	Miss. M.H. Zainab	22/23
Miss. N.R.F. Aftha	22/23	Miss. H. Kaluarachchi	22/23
Mr. C.J. Ihalagedara	22/23	Miss A.M. Siyam	22/23
Miss. K.S. Bhagya	22/23	Mr. M. Jayawardena	22/23
Miss. I.S. Dasanayake	23/24	Mr. A. Dharmakeerthi	23/24
Mr. A.D. Thilakumara	23/24	Mr. D. Chandrawansa	23/24
Miss. D.A. Senarathna	23/24	Miss. A. Senanayake	23/24
Mr. S.R.Samarasinghe	23/24	Mr. N.H. Udawatte	23/24
Mr. N.D.B. Tennakoon	23/24	Miss. P.L. Wilagama	23/24
Miss. P. Sindya	23/24	Miss. G.S. Ariyadasa	24/25
Miss. A. Karunanayake	24/25	Miss.D.Samaradiwakara	24/25
Mr. K.S.J. Shelomith	24/25	Miss. N.Y. Liyanage	24/25
Miss. I.S. Muthumal	24/25	Miss. N. Kumari	24/25
Mr. P.S. Rajapakshe	24/25	Miss. H.U. Rathnayake	24/25
Miss. K. Jayawickrama	24/25		

FOOD & BEVERAGES COMMITTEE

Mr. P.K. Ranasinghe	21/22	Miss. A.A.S. Wathsala	21/22
Mr. J.C.L. Dasanayake	21/22	Mr. H.T. Devapriya	21/22
Miss. J.S. Rathnayaka	21/22	Miss.K. Kumarasinghe	21/22
Miss. P.C. Bandara	22/23	Mr. D.N. Samarasinghe	22/23
Mr. L.M. Pasindu	22/23	Mr. R.P. Rajapaksha	22/23
Miss. G.H. Navanjana	22/23	Mr. I.P. Liyanage	22/23
Miss. T. Paramantham	22/23	Miss. B. Dissanayake	23/24
Mr. S.M. Weerathunga	23/24	Miss. M.M. Fernando	23/24
Miss. B.M. Dissanayake	23/24	Mr. P. Weerasingha	23/24
Mr. M. Hathlahawatta	24/25	Miss. S.D.C. Bandara	24/25
Miss. T.V.D. Supunji	24/25	Miss. S.D.C. Bandara	24/25
Mr. N.S. Aththanayaka	24/25	Mr. Y.G.Y.S.B. Herath	24/25

FINANCE & REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

Mr. N.B. Maparathne	21/22	Miss C.D. Rathnayaka	22/23
Mr. R.A Hamthees	23/24	Mr. T.K Kumarasinghe	24/25

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Mr. B.N.V. Wijethilaka	24/25	Miss L.M.D.S Bandara	22/23
Mr. T. Wijewardhana	23/24	Mr. A.S.D. de Alwis	22/23
Mr. J.M.P.S. Peiris	23/24	Miss C. Wanniarachchi	23/24

Peradeniya Medical Undergraduate Research Symposium

Symposium Agenda

PeMURS '26

TIME	EVENT
08.00 AM	Inauguration Ceremony
08.20 AM	Welcome Speech by Chairperson PeMURS '26 <i>Prof. Samidi Navaratna</i>
08.30 AM	Address by the Vice Chancellor University of Peradeniya <i>Prof. Terrence Madhujith</i>
08.40 AM	Address by the Dean Faculty of Medicine <i>Prof. Saman Nanayakkara</i>
08.50 AM	Address by the Chief Guest Retired Professor of Community Medicine <i>Dr. D. B. Nugegoda</i>
09.05 AM	Faculty Awards
09.30 AM	Keynote Speech <i>Prof. Nuwan Wickramasinghe</i>
10.10 AM	Address by the Student Chairperson PeMURS '26 <i>Mr. Minura Kulasekara</i>
10.15 AM	Vote of Thanks by Secretary PeMURS '26 <i>Dr. Lakshika Pathirana</i>
10.20 AM	MORNING TEA
11.00 AM	Oral Research Presentations Session 01
12.00 AM	LUNCH
01.00 PM	Oral Research Presentations Session 02
02.00 PM	Oral Research Presentations Session 03
03.00 PM	End of Programme

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR

Prof. Terrence Madhujith

It is with great pleasure that I extend my warmest greetings to the organizers, presenters, and participants of the inaugural Peradeniya Medical Undergraduate Research Symposium (PeMURS '26), organized by the Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.

Research and innovation are essential components of medical education and play a vital role in shaping competent and compassionate healthcare professionals. It is encouraging to witness undergraduate students engaging in scientific inquiry and contributing to the advancement of medical knowledge through research activities.

The organization of this symposium reflects the commitment of the Faculty of Medicine to fostering a strong research culture among undergraduates while providing a valuable platform for students to present and share their scholarly work. I am confident that PeMURS '26 will inspire young researchers to pursue academic excellence, critical thinking, and evidence-based practice in their future careers.

I commend the Department of Community Medicine and all those involved in organizing this important event for their dedication and efforts in making this symposium a reality.

I wish PeMURS '26 every success and hope that this initiative will continue to grow and flourish in the years to come.

Prof. Terrence Madhujith

Vice-Chancellor

University of Peradeniya



MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Prof. Saman Nanayakkara

It gives me immense pleasure to send this message to the Peradeniya Medical Undergraduate Research Symposium (PeMURS) 2026. Over the years, research activities among our undergraduate students have continued to flourish, reflecting the Faculty's strong commitment to academic excellence, critical thinking, and scientific inquiry. PeMURS has become an important platform that nurtures these qualities and encourages our students to engage meaningfully in research and innovation.



Research remains an integral pillar of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, and I am delighted to witness the growing enthusiasm and dedication of our undergraduate students towards scholarly activities. The incorporation of research into the undergraduate curriculum has greatly strengthened this culture, inspiring students to explore emerging scientific challenges, contribute new knowledge, and develop solutions that benefit society and healthcare.

PeMURS 2026 provides a valuable opportunity for students, academics, and researchers to come together to present their work, exchange ideas, and foster collaborations. It is particularly encouraging to see young researchers confidently showcasing their findings and engaging in scientific dialogue that will shape the future of medicine and healthcare in Sri Lanka.

We are truly honoured to have Dr D. B. Nugegoda gracing this year's symposium as our Chief Guest and Prof. Nuwan Darshana Wickramasinghe as our Keynote Speaker.

We are also privileged to receive the continued encouragement and support of our higher authorities, especially our Vice-Chancellor, Prof. W.M.T. Madhujith, whose unwavering commitment to research and academic advancement continues to strengthen the culture of scholarship within our university.

I firmly believe that events such as PeMURS not only celebrate the academic achievements of our students but also cultivate a spirit of inquiry, resilience, and lifelong learning. These experiences empower our future medical professionals to approach healthcare challenges with curiosity, compassion, and scientific integrity. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Head and the staff of the Department of Community Medicine for conducting the learning module on research and conducting the examination. I thank the staff and students of the organizing committee of PeMURS for their commitment in organizing this event.

I wish the Peradeniya Medical Undergraduate Research Symposium 2026 every success and extend my heartfelt congratulations to all participants, organizers, and supporters who have contributed towards making this event a reality.

Prof. P.S.K. Nanayakkara

Dean,

Professor in Anaesthesiology,

Faculty of Medicine,

University of Peradeniya.

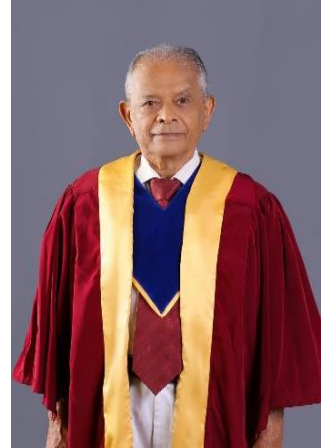
MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF GUEST

Dr D B Nugegoda

As a former Professor and Head of the Department, I am delighted to send this message of felicitation to the Inaugural, Peradeniya Medical Undergraduate Research Symposium organized by the Department of Community Medicine.

It is indeed a landmark achievement made by the Department of Community Medicine.

I take this opportunity to thank Professor Samadhi Navaratne, Head of the Department of Community Medicine and the rest of the Academic staff members of the Department for this endeavor.



Dr D B Nugegoda,
MBBS (Cey.), MSc. (Lond.), FFPH (UK), FCCP (SL).
Former Professor of Community Medicine,
University of Peradeniya
Rajarata University of Sri Lanka
South Asian Institute of Technology & Medicine, (Malabe)

PeMURS

Peradeniya Medical Undergraduate Research Symposium

MESSAGE FROM THE SYMPOSIUM CHAIR

Prof. Samidi Navaratna

It is with profound pride and immense pleasure that I welcome you all to the inaugural Peradeniya Medical Undergraduate Research Symposium – PeMURS’26, organised by the Department of Community Medicine.

This symposium represents the grand culmination of the research journey of our 2020/21 batch of medical students, which began in August 2023. As the Coordinator of the Student Research Projects for almost a decade, I have had the distinct privilege of watching our medical undergraduates evolve over the years. From formulating their very first research questions to navigating the labyrinth of data analysis, ethical clearances, late-night report writing, and facing the *viva voce* examination, they have shown remarkable resilience. Today, that hard work transforms into a platform of intellectual exchange, making them no longer just consumers of medical knowledge, but also creators of it.

As the Head of the Department of Community Medicine, I am particularly heartened to see the diverse scope of the studies presented. True medical advancement cannot exist in a vacuum; it must translate to the wellbeing of the community at large. Many of the projects featured in PeMURS’26 look beyond clinical charts to explore the wider determinants of health. I extend my deepest gratitude to the academic staff members of the Department of Community Medicine, fellow faculty members, supervisors, and examiners who have selflessly invested their time and expertise to guide these young minds.

We are deeply privileged to welcome two illustrious alumni of our faculty who have made monumental contributions to Community Medicine and research education in Sri Lanka for this inaugural symposium. We are honoured to have as our Chief Guest, Dr. D.B. Nugegoda, Retired Professor of Community Medicine at the University of Peradeniya, whose pioneering legacy and decades of dedication continue to shape and guide our department's vision. Joining him is our Keynote Speaker, Prof. Nuwan Wickramasinghe, a globally recognised researcher and the Chair Professor of Community Medicine at the Faculty of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. Having these distinguished alumni return to



inspire the next generation of medical researchers is a beautiful, profound testament to the enduring academic lineage of Peradeniya.

As the Chairperson of PeMURS'26, I must acknowledge that an event of this magnitude is never a solo endeavour. My sincere thanks go to the Dean, the abstract reviewers, and the judges for their invaluable contributions. I am exceptionally proud of our organising committee, which brings together student representatives from all medical batches currently registered in the faculty. By working hand-in-hand alongside our academic and non-academic staff members to plan this event, these students have gained the complete, multi-faceted experience of putting together a professional research symposium from the ground up. I thank them deeply for their tireless efforts.

To our student presenters: this is your stage to showcase your research projects. Approach today as a celebration of your scientific curiosity and hard work. Let this be the launching pad for your future careers as clinician-scientists who do not just accept the status quo, but constantly ask, "Why?" and "How can we make it better?"

I wish you all an inspiring, intellectually stimulating, and successful symposium.

Prof. Samidi Navaratna

MBBS, DCH, MSc, MD

Chairperson, PeMURS'26

Coordinator, Undergraduate Research Stream

Head, Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

Dr. Lakshika Pathirana

It is with great pleasure that I extend my warm greetings to all participants, presenters, and guests of PeMURS'26. This conference provides a valuable platform for medical students to present their research, exchange ideas, and contribute to the advancement of medical knowledge and innovation.



Research and innovation are essential components of medical education and practice. Encouraging students to engage in scientific inquiry not only strengthens their academic development but also nurtures critical thinking, professionalism, and a spirit of lifelong learning. The dedication and enthusiasm demonstrated by our students in conducting and presenting their work are truly commendable.

I would like to congratulate all student researchers whose hard work and commitment have made PeMURS'26 possible. Your efforts reflect the promising future of healthcare and medical science. I also wish to acknowledge the guidance and support provided by the academic staff, mentors, and organizing committee members who have contributed immensely to the success of this event.

May PeMURS'26 serve as a source of inspiration, learning, and collaboration for all participants. I wish the conference every success and hope it will continue to encourage excellence in research and academic achievement.

Dr. Lakshika Pathirana
Symposium Secretary
PeMURS'26

MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

Dr. S. Krishnapradeep

It is with great pleasure that I extend my warm greetings to all participants, presenters, and distinguished guests of the Peradeniya Medical Undergraduate Research Symposium.

The theme of this year's symposium, "From Curiosity to Clinical Impact: Inspiring the Next Generation of Researchers, Innovators and Health Care Leaders," beautifully reflects the importance of nurturing scientific curiosity and transforming it into meaningful contributions to patient care and public health. PeMURS'26 provides an invaluable platform for undergraduate students to engage in research, exchange ideas, and develop the academic and leadership qualities essential for the future of healthcare.

I sincerely commend the dedication and hard work of the organizing committee, faculty members, and all contributors whose efforts have made this symposium possible. I also congratulate all presenters for their enthusiasm and commitment towards advancing medical knowledge and evidence-based practice.

May this symposium inspire young medical professionals to continue pursuing research with passion and integrity, ultimately contributing towards the advancement of healthcare in Sri Lanka and beyond.

I wish PeMURS'26 every success.

Dr. S. Krishnapradeep

Conference Treasurer

Department of Paediatrics,

University of Peradeniya



PeMURS
Peradeniya Medical Undergraduate Research Symposium

MESSAGE FROM THE STUDENT CHAIR

Mr. Minura Kulasekara

As the student chairperson of the inaugural session of PeMURS ,I am grateful for this opportunity to express my thoughts.The Peradeniya Medical Undergraduates Research Symposium is a collective effort by the academic staff and the students to create an avenue for the undergraduate students to access the arena of research presentation and dissemination.



Research has always been fundamental to the practice of modern- day medicine which is best described as evidence based medicine. Therefore,I hope this symposium ignites the passion and curiosity for the undergraduate students to actively engage in research during their future clinical careers and possibly consider research as a career option.

Organizing the inaugural edition of the symposium was an exciting and challenging journey made easier with the endeavours of our academic staff ,non academic staff and students. I am grateful to the academic staff of our faculty for their continued guidance and support. I am also extremely grateful for the students of the Organizing committee who have worked tirelessly to make PeMURS'26 a reality.

I hope that PeMURS will continue to shine bright for generations of students to come, so that they too may have this opportunity.

Mr.Minura Kulasekara
Student Chairperson,
PeMURS'26

KEYNOTE SPEECH

Prof. Nuwan Darshana Wickramasinghe

The Continuum from Curiosity to Evidence and Impact

The progression from early intellectual curiosity to meaningful impact in clinical and population health is characterised by the systematic transformation of initial questions into structured inquiry, robust evidence generation, and applied action within health systems. Curiosity, emerging from observations in academic, community, and health service settings, is recognised as a foundational driver of scientific thinking and professional development across both clinical practice and population health.

Within clinical and community settings, routine observations frequently generate informal questions related to patterns of disease, determinants of health, performance of health systems, and inequities in access to care and health outcomes. When these questions are systematically refined and sustained, they evolve into researchable problems that shape academic trajectories and contribute to long-term professional development in health sciences.

The transition from observation to evidence generation is enabled through structured methodological approaches, which facilitate the transformation of observations from clinical and community practice into measurable, interpretable, and scientifically robust evidence.

The translation of evidence into action constitutes a critical stage within this continuum. Evidence generation alone is insufficient unless it informs policy, practice, and health system strengthening. Research findings are expected to be effectively communicated, contextualised, and integrated within decision-making processes to influence programmes, improve service delivery, and contribute to improved health outcomes at local, national, and global levels.

Health systems thinking, interdisciplinary collaboration, and ethical responsibility are essential in addressing complex and evolving health challenges, including non-communicable diseases, infectious diseases, maternal and child health, mental health, and ageing populations.

Professional development within this continuum is inherently non-linear, shaped by iterative learning, diverse experiences, and continuous adaptation to emerging opportunities and challenges. Sustained intellectual engagement, reflective practice, perseverance, and intellectual humility are consistently associated with meaningful and sustained contributions to health research, policy, and practice.



Teaching, mentorship, and capacity building form an integral part of this continuum. The transfer of knowledge through academic engagement, training, and supervision is recognised as a key mechanism for extending impact beyond individual research outputs, thereby strengthening the next generation of clinicians, public health practitioners, researchers, and policy contributors.

Overall, this continuum is grounded in sustained inquiry, methodological rigour, and the effective translation of knowledge into action, integrating scientific excellence with practical relevance to strengthen health systems and improve population health outcomes.

Professor Nuwan Darshana Wickramasinghe

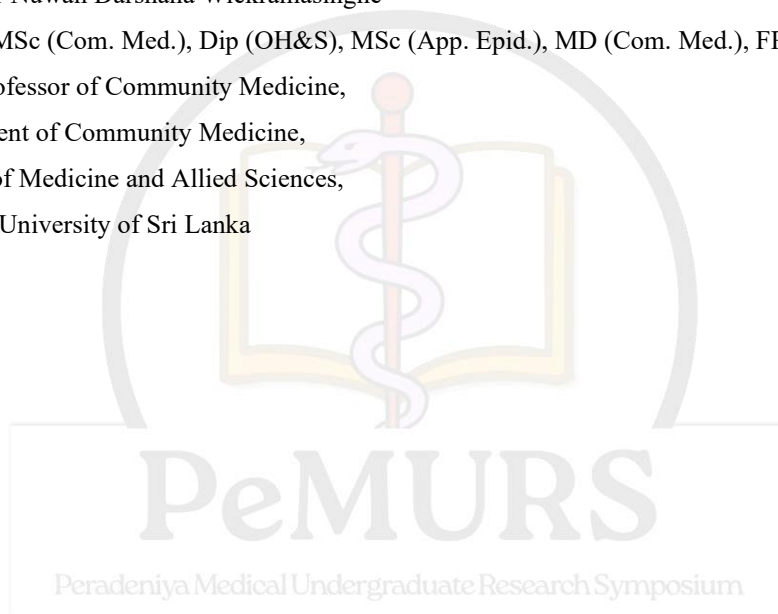
MBBS, MSc (Com. Med.), Dip (OH&S), MSc (App. Epid.), MD (Com. Med.), FRSPH

Chair Professor of Community Medicine,

Department of Community Medicine,

Faculty of Medicine and Allied Sciences,

Rajarata University of Sri Lanka



LIST OF ORAL PRESENTATIONS

PARALLEL SESSION 1A

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 01	<p>THE ASSOCIATION OF SLEEP REGULARITY INDEX (SRI) WITH MEMORY, ATTENTION, AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTION IN MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATES</p> <p><u>MADURANDIKA DM*</u>, WEERASINGHA HPTAR, AUCHITHYA UMBDT, LAKSHAN HMS, THILAKASEKARA PGHP, DASSANAYAKE TL</p>
OP – 02	<p>SCREENING THE FEATURES OF SLEEP APNEA AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA</p> <p><u>LAMABADUSOORIYA KA*</u>, PERERA UWOT, KAVINDA HGS, DISSANAYAKE DMDO, FERNANDO WMSM, JAYALATH WATA</p>
OP – 03	<p>COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF STRESS LEVELS AND STRESSORS AMONG FIRST-YEAR AND THIRD-YEAR MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA</p> <p><u>GUNARATHNA MKJ*</u>, EDIRISINGHE NM, MADHUMANI HUS, PIRAGAJAN M, KUMARASIRI SNB, ATAPATTU DN, ALVIS VKIU</p>
OP – 04	<p>PREVALENCE OF IMPOSTER PHENOMENON AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO INFLUENCING FACTORS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA</p> <p><u>NITHOOSHICKA R*</u>, JAYAWEERA JADSD, RATHNAYAKE WGCN, WEERASINGHE WKNS, PETHIYAGODA K</p>

PARALLEL SESSION 1B

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 01	<p style="text-align: center;">DETERMINATION OF SEX AND STATURE FROM THE ANTHROPOMETRIC MEASUREMENTS OF UPPER LIMB AMONG THE MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATES OF UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA, SRI LANKA</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ABEYKOON AMTDB*, SAMARANAYAKE TDKB, ABEYWICKRAMA SD, KUMANAYAKA JN, <u>SENDANAYAKE JP</u>, VADYSINGH A</p>
OP – 02	<p style="text-align: center;">KEY CRITERIA FOR LIFE PARTNER SELECTION AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA AND THE SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS SHAPING THEM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DHANAWARDANA DAAN, <u>IMBULPITIYA IB</u>, NAWARATNE BGAJ, THARUKA P, WIJERATHNA IHCN, NAVARATNA WMSNK</p>
OP – 03	<p style="text-align: center;">IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATES OF UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>AMNA SKFI*</u>, NIDHA RMF, JAYARATNE EHMD, YASHODA MAD, DIDULANKA DMC, MOREL RP</p>
OP – 04	<p style="text-align: center;">INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SCIENCE STREAM STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA REPORT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PRABODHANA VAY*, FERNANDO PSM, <u>HETTITHANTHRI DSDP</u>, KARUNARATHNA RDKW, MUTHUNAYAKA SYD, BANDARA JM RP</p>

PARALLEL SESSION 1C

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 01	<p>KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES ON PRICK INJURY MANAGEMENT AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS OF FACULTY OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA</p> <p><u>THEENNAKON TMNN*</u>, APONSU GDN, DIWYANJALEE GKT, KUMARI MDT, THEENNAKON TMBG, KUDAGAMMANA HDWS</p>
OP – 02	<p>EFFECT OF HEALTH PROMOTION INTERVENTIONS ON KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND PRACTICES RELATED TO METABOLIC DYSFUNCTION-ASSOCIATED STEATOTIC LIVER DISEASE AMONG STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL COMMUNITY TRIAL</p> <p>WICKRAMARATHNE MRT*, <u>LANKANAYAKE MP</u>, MADUSANI PADP, VIHANGA DWT, BHASHITHA KGA, NAVARATNA WMSNK</p>
OP – 03	<p>HEALTH BEHAVIORS, AWARENESS AND FUTURE RISK PERCEPTION TOWARDS SELECTED NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AMONG STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA AND THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH PARENTAL DISEASE STATUS</p> <p><u>HANSANI GAS*</u>, FERNANDO HOD, MADUSHANI WA, PIRAKASH K, HIRUVINDA HSPY, TENNAKON SUB</p>
OP – 04	<p>AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES AMONG UNDERGRADUATES OF FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA</p> <p><u>NETHMINI WMN*</u>, DHARMASIRI MYA, JAYARATHNA STB, THEENNAKON TMMC, WIJETHUNGA MD, DAHANAYAKE P</p>

PARALLEL SESSION 1D

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 01	<p>KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE ON INFANTILE COLIC AMONG MOTHERS OF INFANTS ATTENDING THE WELL-BABY CLINIC IN A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL</p> <p>INAMALUWA AVHH*, OSHANI SC, FERNANDO WWHN, PREMARATHNE DBGE, <u>KARUNADASA THHK</u>, KRISHNAPRADEEP S</p>
OP – 02	<p>IMPACT OF FOOD SECURITY ON NUTRITIONAL STATUS AMONG CHILDREN AGED 2-5 YEARS ATTENDING CLINICS IN KANDY FOLLOWING THE 2022 ECONOMIC CRISIS</p> <p>GUNASEKARA HDNJ*, <u>KULASEKARA MHB</u>, RAJITHA HGR, RATHNAYAKE RMPM, NAVARATHNA WMSNK</p>
OP – 03	<p>MATERNAL KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES ON COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING AMONG CHILDREN AGED 6–24 MONTHS AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH NUTRITIONAL STATUS AT NATIONAL HOSPITAL KANDY - A HOSPITAL-BASED SURVEY</p> <p><u>SENANAYAKE NSMJL</u>*, IMANJALEE PT, MANURANGI WAP, RANDIKA DBA, NAMGYAL KS, NAVARATNA WMSNK</p>
OP – 04	<p>KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER AND RELATED MISCONCEPTIONS AMONG MOTHERS OF CHILDREN UNDER FIVE IN CENTRAL SRI LANKA.</p> <p>PIYATHISSA HMPP, <u>JINADASA WGTM</u>*, RATHNAYAKE WMPL, WIJESINGHE HBIP, KIRIDENA MGDVK</p>

PARALLEL SESSION 2A

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 01	<p align="center">EVALUATION OF EARLY DIGITAL SCREEN EXPOSURE (DSE), ITS EFFECTS ON LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND PARENTAL AWARENESS OF DSE IN A COHORT OF CHILDREN ATTENDING TERTIARY CARE HOSPITALS IN KANDY DISTRICT, SRI LANKA</p> <p align="center"><u>MAHAULPOTHA WMMT*</u>, HETTIARACHCHI HDHH, SANDARUWANI MKKK, RANASINGHE WRATD, JAYAMPATH AKSA, DISSANAYAKE PV</p>
OP – 02	<p align="center">COMPARISON OF KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES BETWEEN MOTHERS AND FATHERS ON CHILDHOOD VACCINATION UNDER THE NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION PROGRAMME, WHO ACCOMPANY CHILDREN AT PAEDIATRIC CLINIC IN PERADENIYA TEACHING HOSPITAL</p> <p align="center"><u>GUNARATHNA AU</u>, KALINDA MHG*, PERERA ADK, PREMATHILAKA SRSN, RANASOORIYA AHS, FERNANDO DMG</p>
OP – 03	<p align="center">PARENTAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT MANAGEMENT OF FEVER IN PAEDIATRIC PATIENTS</p> <p align="center"><u>WITHANA WDCG*</u>, JITHMI SAS, PIYUMIKA SYA, SAMARATHUNGA NPGNK, THALGAHAGODA RS</p>
OP – 04	<p align="center">ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTIONS REGARDING CHILDHOOD SEIZURE FIRST AID AMONG PARENTS ACCOMPANYING THEIR CHILDREN TO SIRIMAVO BANDARANAIKE SPECIALIZED CHILDREN' S HOSPITAL, PERADENIYA</p> <p align="center"><u>RAVINTHARAN N*</u>, KHANDU KY, KATUGAMPOLA KACJ, SENARATHNA RRG, FERNANDO WIT</p>

PARALLEL SESSION 2B

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 01	<p align="center">COMPARISON OF HISTOPATHOLOGICAL AND CLINICAL DIAGNOSIS OF BENIGN UTERINE CONDITIONS IN PATIENTS ADMITTED TO THE GYNECOLOGICAL WARDS IN TEACHING HOSPITAL PERADENIYA</p> <p align="center"><u>RENISHA RP*</u>, BHAGYA JHN, CHATHURAPRIYA DN, MADHUSANKHA KWSD, WEERASINGHE MDUS, GNANARATHNE S, TENNAKON TMAH</p>
OP – 02	<p align="center">KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES ON CONTRACEPTIVES AND ABORTION WITH REGARDS TO UNPLANNED PREGNANCIES IN KANDY DISTRICT, SRI LANKA</p> <p align="center"><u>SHANAKA KJS*</u>, WIDANAGAMAGE NG, FASRA MSHF, DE SILVA SWDD, NANAYAKKARA MKSIS, GIHAN MC</p>
OP – 03	<p align="center">KNOWLEDGE OF BREAST CANCER AMONG FEMALE TEACHERS IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS IN THE KANDY EDUCATION ZONE</p> <p align="center"><u>HASHARA HGO*</u>, FERNANDO HWMDN, MADUSHANI WN, PIYUMALI HMSK, DISSANAYAKA DMS, DHARMARATNE SD</p>
OP – 04	<p align="center">ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PREGNANCY INDUCED HYPERTENSION IN ANEMIC PREGNANT WOMEN OF AGE 20-35: CASE-CONTROL STUDY</p> <p align="center"><u>SUBASINGHE SASW*</u>, SIRISENA HMV, NIHARA JLS, JAYATHILAKA MJK, RATHNAYAKE PM, GNANARATHNA S</p>
OP - 05	<p align="center">STUDY OF AWARENESS OF POLYCYSTIC OVARY SYNDROME AMONG A/L STUDENTS (FEMALE) IN MUNICIPAL AREA IN KANDY</p> <p align="center"><u>IMENDRA KGIU*</u>, KARUNARATHNE PWJW, RANASINGHE UDG, SAWBHAGYA WAK, KANDAUDA KIC</p>

PARALLEL SESSION 2C

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 01	<p>AWARENESS OF POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION AMONG MOTHERS ADMITTED TO ANTENATAL WARDS IN TWO TERTIARY CARE HOSPITALS IN KANDY DISTRICT</p> <p><u>RAJAKARUNA RMAUI*</u>, BANDARA WMTN, DAKSHIKA KTT, MALSHANI SD, WELAGEDARA UWMBYO, KUDAGAMMANA ST, DEMATAWA HMPU</p>
OP – 02	<p>PREVALENCE OF DEPRESSION IN SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN TYPE 1AB NATIONAL SCHOOLS IN GANGAWATA KORALE EDUCATIONAL ZONE, KANDY, AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND STRESS</p> <p><u>DEVANARAYANA OSH</u>, WICKRAMASINGHE WAVB*, DASANTHA MAH, RIKAZA ARF, MALWATTA MDDH, NAVARATNA WMSNK</p>
OP – 03	<p>EVALUATION OF PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND COGNITIVE STATUS OF POST INTENSIVE CARE PATIENTS IN TEACHING HOSPITAL PERADENIYA</p> <p><u>WICKRAMASINGHE WDRNM*</u>, SAMARAWEEERA SMPD, DAYAS AAIS, DISSANAYAKE DMRT, NANAYAKKARA BGVS, PINTO V</p>
OP – 04	<p>PHYSICAL DISABILITY AND PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPACT OF CHRONIC LYMPHEDEMA ASSESSED USING SF-36 HEALTH SURVEY IN PATIENT, ATTENDING VASCULAR CLINIC AT TEACHING HOSPITAL PERADENIYA</p> <p><u>SARDHAN MSM*</u>, HABARAGAMUWA HSU, RAHMA HMGKMR, KARUNARATHNA SVMPM, RATTHNAYAKE RMJBS</p>

PARALLEL SESSION 2D

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 01	<p>LIMITED JOINT MOBILITY SYNDROME AMONG PATIENTS WITH DIABETES AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH AGE AND GENDER IN A HOSPITAL-BASED POPULATION IN KANDY DISTRICT</p> <p><u>SURESHKUMAR M*</u>, CHAMINDI GGBN, LIYANAGE GLAK, VISHAGARABAVAN T, WIJESIRI GKGTD, DISSANAYAKE JK</p>
OP – 02	<p>SELF-CARE DIABETIC FOOT ULCERS IN THE KANDY DISTRICT: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY</p> <p><u>FERNANDO WSD*</u>, DE ZOYSA HDL, NASHIRA MNF, SILVA HNN, WIJAYAPRIYA RAN, DASSANAYAKA B</p>
OP – 03	<p>KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE AMONG DIABETIC ATTENDING TEACHING HOSPITAL PERADENIYA AND NATIONAL HOSPITAL KANDY</p> <p>SURINDA RPK*, HERATH WHMSA, NAVODYA PGM, WIJENAYAKE WMLU, <u>DESHAPPRIYA HAKH</u>, SAMARASINGHE AKBTTB</p>
OP – 04	<p>PREVALENCE OF ORAL CANDIDA IN A COHORT OF PATIENTS TREATED FOR DIABETIC FOOT ULCER DISEASE</p> <p><u>SENEVIRATHNE SMST*</u>, MARASINGHE MPM, INDRACHAPA BAS, RASHATHA AST, MENDHA TSHOMO GYELTSHEN, PEIRIS SPM, JAYATHILAKA JAMS</p>
OP – 05	<p>DESCRIBING THE SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS, MEDICINES, INVESTIGATIONS AND OUT OF POCKET COST OF PATIENTS ATTENDING THE DIABETIC CLINIC - NATIONAL HOSPITAL KANDY</p> <p><u>PRIYADARSHANA PKSS*</u>, RATNAYAKE RMYSB, SANDEEPANI JTI, KAMSHAVI T, DHARMARATNE SD</p>

PARALLEL SESSION 3A

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 01	<p align="center">PATIENTS’ KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES REGARDING PHARMACOTHERAPY IN DIABETES MELLITUS AT A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL IN SRI LANKA</p> <p align="center"><u>JAYALATH RP*</u>, PATHIRANA HPKC, PREMATHILAKE PHLP, DILHARI GUD, GODAKANDA CNG, DALUGAMA C</p>
OP – 02	<p align="center">ASSESSING KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES RELATED TO WESTERN AND ALTERNATIVE HYPOGLYCEMIC MEDICATION AMONG TYPE II DIABETIC PATIENTS IN TERTIARY CARE HOSPITALS IN KANDY DISTRICT</p> <p align="center"><u>RAGURAJ T*</u>, KAUSHALYA AD, GUNARATHNA GDMV, RAJAPAKSHA RCS, GAMAGE SY, PATHIRAGE LPMMK</p>
OP – 03	<p align="center">KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES REGARDING DIETARY AND FLUID MANAGEMENT AMONG STAGE FIVE CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE PATIENTS UNDERGOING HAEMODIALYSIS IN KANDY, SRI LANKA</p> <p align="center"><u>BANDARANAYAKE BMDS</u>, DILANKA KGH, KAHAGALLA KGYB, PAHASARA KGP*, HERATH HMST, DISSANAYAKE K</p>
OP – 04	<p align="center">NUTRITIONAL STATUS, DIETARY PRACTICES AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS AMONG THE OLD PERSONS IN THE ELDERLY CLINIC AT THE TEACHING HOSPITAL PERADENIYA</p> <p align="center"><u>DHARMASIRI VDGJM*</u>, DILSHAN SAR, KARUNATHILAKE GS, PERERA MTM, DESHAN DGS, PADMINI SMJ</p>

PARALLEL SESSION 3B

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 01	<p>PREVALENCE OF SMOKING AND AWARENESS OF THE RISK OF SMOKING AMONG PATIENTS ATTENDING CARDIOLOGY CLINICS IN NATIONAL HOSPITAL KANDY & TEACHING HOSPITAL PERADENIYA</p> <p><u>SHARMIKA S*</u>, DE SILVA LBNPS, KUMARASIRI PDML, AHAMED MNN, FATIMA AM, TENNAKON TMSUB</p>
OP – 02	<p>RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FATTY LIVER DISEASE AND A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE: A HOSPITAL-BASED CASE-CONTROL STUDY.</p> <p><u>JAYAPALA KTDTH*</u>, THENNAKON MSBWTMRP, WIJESINGHE WAAO, NETHMINI UDK, DHARMASIRI AGCK, NAVARATNA WMSNK, ADIKARI SB</p>
OP – 03	<p>THE ROLE OF ANTHROPOMETRIC PARAMETERS, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND DIETARY PATTERN IN THE PATIENTS WITH ACUTE CORONARY SYNDROME ADMITTED TO A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL IN SRI LANKA</p> <p><u>ABEYNAYAKA AA*</u>, RESHANI WGO, SENEVIRATHNA DIJM, LAKHARI GDE, RALAPANAWA DMPUK</p>
OP – 04	<p>KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES ON DIETARY SALT INTAKE AMONG OPD AND HYPERTENSION CLINIC ATTENDEES OF TEACHING HOSPITAL, PERADENIYA, SRI LANKA</p> <p><u>HANSIKA HDB*</u>, WADUGE WWSS, LAKSHAN GMD, ATHTHANAYAKE AMWTB, MARAMBE KN</p>

PARALLEL SESSION 3C

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 01	<p align="center">KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES REGARDING CHEMOTHERAPY AMONG PATIENTS WITH CANCER WHO ARE ON CHEMOTHERAPY ATTENDING NATIONAL HOSPITAL KANDY</p> <p align="center"><u>SANKEERANI G*</u>, ABISHANTH L, DASSANAYAKA DKHY, KUMARA MMPN, SEWWANDI SJLN, GUNARATHNE R, GUNARATNE ND, RAJAGURU S, KANDEGEDARA SL, RATNATUNGA CN</p>
OP – 02	<p align="center">DENGUE-RELATED KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES AMONG POLYCLINIC ATTENDEES IN THE YATINUWARA MOH AREA, KANDY</p> <p align="center"><u>SETHURAGAVAN P*</u>, SIVANANTHAN Y, KUMARATHUNGA CMSC, DISSANAYAKE DMRK, AHINSA WK, NAVARATNA WMSNK</p>
OP – 03	<p align="center">DECODING PREDICTORS OF PNEUMONIA SEVERITY IN HOSPITALIZED ADULT PATIENTS</p> <p align="center"><u>SUKRA MAF*</u>, THENNAKON TBSP, DIWYANJALEE AAKT, KUMARATHUNGA PPA, ANURADHA SWLS, CHANDRASEKARA CMJC, RATNAYAKE RMIUK, YASARATNE BMGD</p>
OP – 04	<p align="center">KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE REGARDING TRANSMISSION, REACTIVATION AND AGE-RELATED COMPLICATIONS OF VARICELLA ZOSTER VIRUS INFECTION AMONG CLINICAL AND PRE-CLINICAL MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATES FROM UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA</p> <p align="center">RIZWAN R, NERANJALIKA ULNP, <u>JAYASEKARA JTH</u>, SENEVIRATHNE USU*, RATHNAYAKE MCP, NOORDEEN F</p>

PARALLEL SESSION 3D

INDEX	ABSTRACT & AUTHORS
OP – 1	<p>PERCEPTIONS OF OUTPATIENT VISITORS ON PHYSICIANS’ ATTIRE AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH TRUST, SATISFACTION, AND PERCEIVED INFECTION RISK: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY</p> <p>ABEYGUNASEKARA JS*, ABEYSEKARA AGCK, KULATHUNGA M, SACHINI KPA, <u>SENAVIRATHNA HPDS</u>, LIYANAPATHIRANA V</p>
OP – 2	<p>PERCEPTIONS OF DOCTORS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC ON FEATURES OF AN EFFECTIVE THERAPEUTIC (DOCTOR-PATIENT) RELATIONSHIP</p> <p><u>BANDARANAYAKE RMDS*</u>, DILPANA HAB, KARUNANANDA PHSR, PERERA KNS, DAYARATNA PGKN, EDUSSURIYA DH</p>
OP – 3	<p>ASSESSING KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND BARRIERS TO PROCEDURAL PAIN MANAGEMENT AMONG PEDIATRIC HEALTHCARE WORKERS IN TERTIARY HOSPITALS IN KANDY</p> <p><u>EKANAYAKE EMNL*</u>, AMARASINGHE GHL, DILSHANI LPT, KODITHUWAKKU KACN, PERERA TDI, SENEVIRATHNE HMTW</p>
OP – 4	<p>PREVALENCE OF COMPUTER VISION SYNDROME IN ADOLESCENTS IN GANGAWATAKORALE EDUCATION DIVISION</p> <p><u>FERNANDO KPA*</u>, CHATHURANI I, MADANAYAKA IK, NIWARATHANA HBR, WANNINAYAKE WMSL, NAVARATHNA WMSNK</p>

The association of sleep regularity index (SRI) with memory, attention, and executive functions in medical undergraduates

Madurandika DM^{1}, Weerasingha HPTAR¹, Auchithya UMBDT¹, Lakshan HMS¹,
Thilakasekara PGHP¹, Dassanayake TL²*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*²Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**malith413@yahoo.com*

Introduction: Sleep regularity index (SRI) measures consistency of sleep and wake times of an individual, with lower SRI scores indicating greater irregularity. Sleep regularity may better predict health outcomes than sleep duration alone. Recent research suggests a higher SRI is linked to better academic performance. We hypothesized that this is mediated by improved cognitive functions. Constant engagement in academic and clinical activities maximally utilizes cognitive functions of medical undergraduates, making them highly sensitive to any variations caused by sleep irregularities.

Objectives: To investigate whether SRI is associated with learning, memory, attention, and executive functions among medical undergraduates.

Methods: Eighty-eight third year medical undergraduates from University of Peradeniya (mean age 23.69 ± 0.82 years; 71.6% female) documented their daily sleep and wake times for 28 days in a sleep diary. SRI was calculated. Sixteen participants randomly selected from each SRI quartile (total $n=64$) were assessed with standard cognitive tests: Rey Auditory Verbal Learning Test, Digit Span test, Symbol Digit Modalities Test, Trail-Making Test A and B, and Victoria Stroop Test. Participants' GPAs were derived from official records. SRI scores were correlated with cognitive test scores and completion times using Spearman's rho or Pearson's r .

Results: Mean SRI was 89.72 (SD=4.30). Higher SRI scores significantly correlated with higher test scores across all tests ($r=0.310$ to 0.635 , $p<0.05$) and faster completion times, except TMT B-A. SRI did not correlate with sleep duration ($r=0.036$, $p=0.743$). Partial correlations between SRI and cognitive outcomes—adjusted for sleep duration—remained significant. Grade point average (GPA) also increased with higher SRI ($r=0.376$, $p<0.001$).

Conclusion: Higher SRI is associated with better memory, attention, and executive functions, independent of sleep duration. These findings suggest that improvement of cognitive functions with regular sleep mediates better academic performance.

Keywords: *Sleep regularity, sleep regularity index, memory, attention, executive functions*

Screening the features of sleep apnea among medical students at the University of Peradeniya

Lamabadusooriya KA^{1*}, Perera UWOT¹, Kavinda HGS¹, Dissanayake DMDO¹,
Fernando WMSM¹, Jayalath WATA²

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²Department of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*kethakaaselalamabadusooriya@gmail.com

Introduction: Sleep apnea is a widespread sleeping disorder that has a global impact. Recent studies have extensively researched risk factors for sleep apnea, including stroke, cardiovascular diseases, and chronic lung diseases. Furthermore, studies have investigated sleep apnea knowledge and attitudes among medical students, as well as the relationship between sleep apnea symptoms and cardiovascular diseases in this population. This issue has also emerged as a significant public health concern in Sri Lanka. Therefore, our study aims to screen the risk of sleep apnea among medical students using the Epworth Sleepiness Scale. We anticipate that the findings of this study will contribute to the development of programs aimed at identifying medical students with the features of sleep apnea, facilitating early diagnosis of those at risk, providing appropriate referrals and treatment, and ultimately reducing morbidity and complications associated with this disorder.

Objectives: To screen the features of sleep apnea among medical students at the University of Peradeniya using the Epworth Sleepiness Scale.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among medical students of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, using the Epworth Sleepiness Scale. A total of 550 participants aged 18 to 26 years were included in this study from 2024 November to December. The Epworth sleepiness scale was used to screen the features of sleep apnea among medical students.

Results: Among 550 medical students surveyed using the Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS), 48% demonstrated high levels of daytime sleepiness (ESS ≥ 10), indicative of potential sleep apnea. A significant association was found between sleepiness levels and students' perception of academic impairment ($\chi^2 = 11.41$, $p = 0.0007$). Awareness of sleep apnea was limited, with only 17.45% recognizing genetic factors as a contributor and just 6% having discussed sleep-related issues with a healthcare professional. Additionally, 82.18% reported not making any lifestyle changes to improve sleep quality.

Conclusion: The findings highlight a concerning prevalence of excessive sleepiness and a potential risk of sleep apnea among medical students, which may adversely affect academic performance. The results also underscore a considerable gap in knowledge and awareness of sleep apnea and its health implications, suggesting the need for targeted educational initiatives and early screening within this population.

Keywords: *Sleep apnea, Epworth Sleepiness Scale*

Comparative analysis of stress levels and stressors among first-year and third-year medical undergraduate students at the University of Peradeniya

Gunarathna MKJ¹*, Edirisinghe NM¹, Madhumini HUS¹, Piragajan M¹,
Kumarasiri SNB¹, Atapattu DN², Alwis VKIU³

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²Department of Parasitology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

³Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of
Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*mkjgunarathna1915@gmail.com

Introduction: Undergraduate medical education is inherently demanding and is often associated with high levels of psychological stress. In Sri Lanka, limited research has explored how academic, intrapersonal, and language-related factors influence stress among medical undergraduates.

Objectives: To analyze and compare stress levels and stressors among first-year and third-year medical undergraduate students at the University of Peradeniya.

Methods: This analytical cross-sectional study was conducted among first-year and third-year medical students (2020/21 and 2022/23 batches) in a state medical faculty, with a sample of 405 students. A self-administered, validated questionnaire, the Medical Student Stressor Questionnaire (MSSQ), consisting of 40 stressor items across five subscales and a supplementary item assessing English language difficulties, was used. Data were analyzed using descriptive and analytical statistics, including the Mann–Whitney U test and Kruskal–Wallis test, to assess batch-wise differences and associations with demographic factors.

Results: Academic-, learning-, patient-, staff-, and student-related stress levels showed mixed results between the two batches, while intrapersonal stress levels were consistently higher among first-year students. However, total stress levels did not differ significantly between the two batches. In both batches, the majority of students experienced moderate to high stress, particularly in academic-related and intrapersonal domains. Key stressors included heavy workload, time management difficulties, and high self-expectations. Stress levels were not significantly associated with most socio-demographic variables, except ethnicity and gender. English language difficulties were significantly associated with ethnicity, parental education, type of residence, and income level.

Conclusion: Although overall stress levels did not differ between first-year and third-year students, distinct domain-specific variations were observed. These findings highlight the need for targeted interventions to address key stressors and to mitigate language-related challenges among medical students.

Keywords: *Stress, stressors, medical students, MSSQ*

Prevalence of imposter phenomenon and its relationship to influencing factors among undergraduate medical students of University of Peradeniya

Nithooshicka R¹, Jayaweera JADSD¹, Rathnayake WGCN¹,
Weerasinghe WKNS¹, Pethiyagoda K²*

*¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya,
Sri Lanka*

*²Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine,
University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**nithooramesh5@gmail.com*

Introduction: Imposter phenomenon (IP) is a psychological experience marked by self-doubt and the inability to internalize one's accomplishments, commonly affecting high-achieving individuals, particularly in demanding academic environments such as medical schools. It can adversely impact mental health, academic performance and professional development.

Objectives: To determine the prevalence of imposter phenomenon among undergraduate medical students at the University of Peradeniya and assess its association with factors such as gender, academic year, family income, parental educational level and self-esteem.

Methods: A descriptive analytical cross-sectional study was conducted from November 25 to December 9, 2024, among 413 undergraduate medical students from all five academic years. Data were collected using a self-administered online questionnaire incorporating the Clance Imposter Phenomenon Scale (CIPS) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 22.0, applying chi-square tests, independent t-tests, and linear regression to determine significant associations.

Results: The sample consisted of 36.1% male students and 63.9% female students. According to the CIPS scoring guidelines, 5.6% of students had mild IP, 42.1% moderate, 43.9% frequent and 9.2% intense IP. Female students had significantly higher mean IP scores compared to males ($t = -2.08$, $df = 411$, $P = 0.038$). Additionally, a significant inverse relationship was found between self-esteem and IP scores ($r = -0.48$, $P < 0.001$). No significant associations were found between IP and monthly family income or parental education.

Conclusion: IP is highly prevalent among medical students, especially among females. Low self-esteem significantly correlates with higher IP. These findings highlight the need for targeted mental health support, self-esteem enhancement initiatives, and mentorship programs within medical education.

Keywords: *Imposter Syndrome, Medical students, Self-esteem*

Determination of sex and stature from the anthropometric measurements of upper limb among the medical undergraduates of University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Abeykoon AMTDB¹, Samaranayake TDKB¹, Abeywickrama SD¹, Kumanayaka JN¹, Sendanayake JP¹, Vadysingh A²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Forensic Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*theviniabeykoon@gmail.com

Introduction: Determining sex and estimating stature are essential steps in creating a biological profile in forensic identification. However, there is a lack of population-specific data for Sri Lankans.

Objectives: This study aimed to estimate stature and determine sex among the medical undergraduates of University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka using upper limb anthropometric measurements and to formulate locally appropriate regression models.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among medical undergraduates of University of Peradeniya, selected through stratified random sampling. Upper limb length (ULL), arm length (AL), forearm length (FL), palm length (PL), and palm breadth (PB) were measured using standard anthropometric tools. Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26.

Results: The sample consisted of 298 healthy individuals with equal sex distribution, aged 19-25 years, with a median age of 22.00 years. The median height of the participants was 162.5 cm, (range: 143.0-190.0 cm). ULL showed the strongest correlation with stature ($r=0.891$, $p<0.001$). The linear regression analysis explained 84.7% of the variance in stature could be explained by upper limb anthropometric measurements ($R^2=0.847$). The regression equation derived to determine stature in both sexes was $\text{stature} = 29.787 + 0.790(\text{ULL}) + 0.940(\text{AL}) + 0.138(\text{PL}) + 0.181(\text{PB})$. Sex determination was performed using logistic regression analysis, and achieved 91.6% overall accuracy (89.3% males, 94.0% females) with ULL and PB being the most significant predictors ($p<0.001$ for both).

Conclusion: In this study, ULL and PB were found as the most reliable measurements for determining sex and stature. The generated regression models showed the need for further localized research.

Keywords: *Anthropometry, body height, forensic anthropology, sex determination analysis, upper extremity*

Key criteria for life partner selection and associated sociodemographic factors among medical students at the University of Peradeniya

Dhanawardana DAAN¹*, *Imbulpitiya IB*¹, Nawaratne BGAJ¹, Tharuka P¹,
Wijerathna IHCN¹, Navaratna WMSNK²

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*alokadhanawardana@gmail.com

Introduction: Partner selection is influenced by emotional, social, and cultural factors. Among medical students, academic demands and professional aspirations may further shape these preferences. Understanding their priorities and associated socio-demographic influences provides insight into evolving relationship trends among educated youth.

Objectives: To identify the key criteria considered in selecting a life partner among medical students at the University of Peradeniya, to compare preferences by gender, and to determine the influence of socio-demographic factors such as age, ethnicity, religion, and family income.

Method: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 328 undergraduate medical students selected through proportionate stratified random sampling. Data was collected using a self-administered online questionnaire. Descriptive statistics summarized partner selection criteria, and chi-square tests were used to assess associations between socio-demographic variables and preferences. A p-value <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Results: Emotional intelligence (44.2%), communication skills (34.1%), and stability and responsibility (28.7%) were ranked as the most important criteria for partner selection. Physical attractiveness and financial status were comparatively less prioritized. Female students placed greater emphasis on emotional compatibility and professional respect, while male students showed relatively higher preference for physical attractiveness and ethnic similarity ($p < 0.05$). Ethnicity was significantly associated with preferences for same-ethnicity and same-caste partners ($p < 0.05$). Family income significantly influenced expectations regarding a partner earning more ($p = 0.004$), whereas religion showed no significant association with most criteria. A majority preferred a partner from the same profession, with “doctor” being the most selected option (54.2%).

Conclusion: Emotional and psychological compatibility are the primary determinants of partner selection among medical students. Gender and ethnicity influence specific expectations, while religion has limited impact. These findings reflect shifting values among educated youth and highlight the importance of addressing relationship readiness within student wellbeing initiatives.

Keywords: *Life partner selection, emotional intelligence, socio-demographic factors, gender based associations*

Impact of social media on academic performance of medical undergraduates of University of Peradeniya

Amna SKFI^{1*}, *Nidha RMF*¹, *Jayaratne EHMD*¹, *Yashoda MAD*¹, *Didulanka DMC*¹, *Morel RP*²

¹ *Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

² *Department of Parasitology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*fathima.amna.20@med.pdn.ac.lk

Introduction: Social media has become an integral part of daily life among university students, including medical undergraduates. It offers opportunities for academic support, communication, and information sharing, but excessive use may lead to distractions and poor study habits. The relationship between social media usage and academic performance remains complex and inconclusive, particularly in the Sri Lankan context.

Objectives: The objective of this study was to examine the correlation between social media usage patterns and academic performance among medical undergraduates. Specific objectives included assessing the relationship between social media usage and GPA, evaluating its impact on study time, identifying commonly used platforms, and exploring the influence of demographic factors.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among first- and second-year medical students at the University of Peradeniya in 2024. A total of 384 students participated. Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire covering socio-demographic characteristics, social media usage patterns, and academic performance. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS, and associations were assessed using Chi-square and Fisher's Exact tests.

Results: Most students (72.7%) used social media over five times daily, primarily WhatsApp (97.1%) and YouTube (92.7%). While 72.1% used these platforms to find study materials, frequent use during lectures and study sessions was common. Although social media usage showed no significant link to GPA ($p > 0.05$), high usage significantly correlated with reduced study time, increased distractions, and negative academic perceptions ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Social media plays a dual role as both an academic aid and a source of distraction. Excessive social media use harms study habits and time management, even if it doesn't directly lower grades. Promoting balanced use is essential to optimize medical students' academic outcomes.

Keywords: *Academic performance, descriptive cross-sectional study, distractions, GPA, medical undergraduates, social media usage, study habits*

Influence of emotional intelligence on academic performance of science stream students of University of Peradeniya report

Prabodhana VAY^{1}, Fernando PSM¹, Hettithanthri DSDP¹, Karunarathna RDKW¹,
Muthunayaka SYD¹, Bandara JMRP²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**yasirprabodana7@gmail.com*

Introduction: It is becoming more widely acknowledged that emotional intelligence (EI), or the capacity to recognize, control, and regulate emotions, has an impact on academic performance (AP), especially in high-stress domains like science. This study investigates the connection between AP and EI among science streamers undergraduates of University of Peradeniya.

Objectives: To assess the effect of emotional intelligence on academic performance among science stream students at the University of Peradeniya and to explore its variation across different faculties, academic years, genders, and sociodemographic backgrounds.

Methods: 392 undergraduate students from six faculties that provide science-based education participated in a descriptive cross-sectional study. A validated self-administered Genos Emotional Intelligence Concise Questionnaire was used to gather data, and GPA values were used to evaluate academic performance. SPSS software was used for statistical studies, such as ANOVA and correlation tests, and regression analysis.

Results: EI and academic achievement were found to be statistically significantly positively correlated ($\rho = 0.121$, $p = 0.017$). Third-year students had the highest EI scores, although values fluctuated greatly between academic years. Female students had significantly higher GPAs than male students ($p = 0.010$) while there was no effect of gender on EI. Additionally, there were weak correlations between EI and faculty, financial status, and extracurricular activities. Nevertheless, the regression model did not show that EI was an independent predictor of GPA after adjusting for covariates.

Conclusion: Despite a positive correlation between emotional intelligence (EI) and academic achievement, several sociodemographic variables seem to limit this relationship. To support complete student growth and educational results, the findings highlight the potential advantages of applying EI-enhancing interventions in academic contexts.

Keywords: *Influence of emotional intelligence, academic performance, science stream students, University of Peradeniya*

Knowledge, attitudes and practices on Needlestick/Prick Injury Management among medical students of Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya

*Thennakoon TMNN¹**, *Aponsu GDN¹*, *Diwyanjalee GKT¹*, *Kumari MDT¹*,
Thennakoon TMBG¹, *Kudagammana HDWS²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Microbiology, Faculty of medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*nisalnayanajiththennakoon28019@gmail.com

Introduction: Proper handling and disposal of sharps are essential to prevent needlestick injuries. Healthcare personnel must be knowledgeable about immediate post-exposure management, including wound care, risk assessment, and timely post-exposure prophylaxis, to reduce infection risk.

Objectives: To evaluate the knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding the prevention and management of prick injuries among four batches (second-2021/22 to fifth-2018/19 year) of medical students at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted using validated, pretested structured questionnaires. Data were collected from December 2024 to January 2025. Statistical tests were applied (One-way ANOVA) to compare results among batches. Knowledge, attitude, and practice scores were calculated.

Results: A total of 609 students participated (54% female). Immediate wound washing was identified by 84-89%. Awareness of contacting the Infection Control Unit declined from 90.2% (fifth year) to 40.2% (second year). Knowledge of Hepatitis B vaccination was high (97-100%), while misconceptions remained regarding Hepatitis C (32-46%) and HIV (7-18%). Knowledge scores (out of 25) increased with seniority ($p < 0.001$). Attitude scores (out of 14) also improved with seniority ($p < 0.001$); however, attitude toward peer supervision regarding sharps disposal was low (18-28%), and unsafe practices were more frequent among juniors. Sharps disposal adherence was higher among senior batches (5th-83.1%, 4th-82.2%) compared to juniors (3rd-68.2%, 2nd-76.9%). Overall, the needlestick incident was 41-63% at least once, and with rates of repeated exposure in about 27%. Practice scores varied significantly between batches ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Knowledge regarding needlestick/prick injury management was insufficient, especially among juniors. Knowledge, attitude, and practice improved with seniority, indicating the positive impact of clinical exposure and academic training. Therefore the need for infection control education is important.

Keywords: *Knowledge, attitude, and practice on prick injury management*

Effect of health promotion interventions on knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease among students of University of Peradeniya: a quasi-experimental community trial

Wickramarathne MRT¹*, Lankanayake MP¹, Madusani PADP¹, Vihanga DWT¹,
Bhashitha KGA¹, Navaratna WMSNK²

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
²Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of
Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*wickramarathnethenuka@gmail.com

Introduction: Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MASLD) is a major public health issue increasingly prevalent among young adults, who are at heightened risk due to sedentary behaviour, academic pressure, and unhealthy diets. In Sri Lanka, low awareness of MASLD and a lack of targeted educational outreach remain problematic.

Objectives: This study was conducted to evaluate the effect of a tailored health promotion intervention on the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) related to MASLD among undergraduates at the University of Peradeniya.

Methods: A pre-test/post-test single-armed community intervention study was conducted with 140 students from two randomly selected faculties (Faculties of Dental Sciences and Management), from one randomly selected batch. The data was collected using a self-administered, pre-validated questionnaire. Participants first completed the questionnaire, then received a brief educational video and a leaflet on MASLD. Post-intervention KAP was assessed after a two-week washout period using a Google Form. Statistical analysis used Wilcoxon signed-rank and McNemar-Bowker tests. The significance threshold was $p < 0.05$.

Results: Initial awareness of MASLD was only 34.3%, which significantly increased to 84.25% post-intervention. The total median knowledge score improved significantly from 8.5 to 21.0 ($Z = -8.331$, $p < 0.001$). Changes in attitudes included a higher intent to take preventive actions. Self-reported practice improvements included a significant reduction in the intake of sugary drinks ($p = 0.019$), fast food ($p < 0.001$), and unhealthy snacks ($p < 0.001$), along with increased physical activity duration ($p = 0.030$) and frequency ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusions: A low-cost educational intervention significantly improved the knowledge, attitudes and self-reported behaviours of university students towards MASLD. However, results may have been affected by self-reporting bias. This study highlights the need to integrate Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) awareness into tertiary education programs.

Keywords: *Metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease, health promotion, health knowledge, attitudes, practices, university students, health education, Sri Lanka*

Health behaviors, awareness, and future risk perception towards selected non-communicable diseases among students of the University of Peradeniya and their association with parental disease status

Hansani, GAS^{1}, Fernando, HOD¹, Madushani, WA¹, Pirakash, K¹, Hiruvinda, HSPY¹, Tennakoon, SUB²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*hansanis684@gmail.com

Introduction: Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), particularly diabetes mellitus and hypertension, are major contributors to morbidity and mortality worldwide. Early adulthood health behaviors influence future disease risk. Parental history of NCDs may affect students' lifestyle practices, awareness and perception of future risk.

Objectives: To describe health behaviors, awareness and future risk perception regarding selected NCDs among students of the University of Peradeniya and to assess their association with parental diabetes mellitus and hypertension.

Methods: A comparative cross-sectional study was conducted among second-year students of selected faculties. Data were collected using a self-administered online questionnaire. Health behaviors assessed included diet, physical activity, smoking and alcohol consumption. Awareness and future risk perception were measured using structured scoring systems, with scores above 60% considered adequate. Monovariate and bivariate analyses were performed using appropriate statistical tests.

Results: A total of 415 students participated (mean age 23.2 years); 42.9% reported at least one parent with diabetes mellitus or hypertension. Only 28.2% followed a healthy diet and 19.5% met recommended physical activity levels. Current smoking was reported by 6.7%, while 5.8% consumed alcohol above the defined safe limit. Adequate awareness was observed in 63.1% and high future risk perception in 48.0% of students. No statistically significant association was found between parental NCD status and students' health behaviors, awareness or risk perception ($p > 0.05$). Science stream students demonstrated significantly higher awareness, risk perception and physical activity levels compared to non-science students.

Conclusion: Parental NCD status was not significantly associated with students' health behaviors, awareness or perceived future risk. University-level health promotion strategies are necessary to improve healthy lifestyle practices among all students.

Keywords: *Non-communicable diseases, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, health behaviour, risk perception, awareness*

Awareness and knowledge of sexually transmitted diseases among undergraduates of Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya

Nethmini WMN^{1}, Dharmasiri MYA¹, Jayarathna STB¹, Thennakoon TMMC¹,
Wijethunga MD¹, Dahanayake P²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*nadeeshanethmini7@gmail.com

Introduction: Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) cause significant health risks, predominantly among late adolescents who are sexually active. In Sri Lanka, while overall incidence is low, prevalence is rising. Undergraduates represent a vulnerable group due to potential high-risk behaviors and a lack of comprehensive sex education.

Objectives: To determine the awareness and knowledge of STDs, including types, symptoms, transmission, and prevention, and to evaluate attitudes toward STDs among undergraduates of the Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted among 420 first to third-year undergraduates using a self-administered online questionnaire. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26, employing descriptive statistics and Chi-square tests to identify associations between variables.

Results: Out of 415 respondents (98.8% response rate), 68.7% had satisfactory knowledge, 17.6% had good knowledge, and 13.7% had poor knowledge. Knowledge was significantly associated with gender, age, and academic year ($p < 0.05$), with males scoring higher than females. While 95.9% correctly identified unprotected sex as a transmission route, 65.7% held the misconception that STDs spread via public toilets. Regarding prevention, 79.7% identified male condoms as effective, but 73.2% incorrectly believed taking antibiotics before/after sex was preventive. Positively, 81.2% of participants exhibited favorable attitudes toward individuals living with STDs.

Conclusion: The majority of undergraduates (86.3%) possess satisfactory or good knowledge, and the majority also hold positive attitudes toward people living with HIV. However, specific knowledge gaps and misconceptions regarding transmission and prevention remain. Targeted health education programs are recommended to bridge these gaps and reduce transmission risks. This research will guide to find the gaps in knowledge and create targeted education programmes.

Keywords: *Sexually transmitted diseases, undergraduates, knowledge, attitudes*

Knowledge and attitude on infantile colic among mothers of infants attending the well-baby clinic in a tertiary care hospital

Inamaluwa AVHH¹, Oshani SC¹, Fernando WWHN¹, Premarathne DBGE¹,
Karunadasa THHK¹, Krishnapradeep S²*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*²Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya,
Sri Lanka*

**himaya.inamaluwa.20@med.pdn.ac.lk*

Introduction: Infantile colic is a self-limiting condition characterized by excessive crying in otherwise healthy infants, often causing significant distress to families. Despite its common occurrence, local data on maternal knowledge and attitudes toward infantile colic remain limited.

Objectives: To assess the knowledge and attitudes regarding infantile colic among mothers of infants attending a well-baby clinic at a tertiary care hospital, to identify associated factors, and to compare findings between mothers of colicky infants and those without colic.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among mothers of infants attending the well-baby clinic at Teaching Hospital Peradeniya. Data were collected using an interviewer-administered, pre-tested questionnaire.

Results: The mean knowledge score was 3.46 ± 1.10 out of 6, indicating a moderate level of understanding. Although 91.2% correctly recognized colic as a non-serious condition, misconceptions were common. 55.6% believed breastfeeding mothers should avoid certain foods, and only 30.4% identified overfeeding as a potential risk factor. Mothers with prior experience of infantile colic demonstrated significantly higher knowledge scores compared to those without such experience ($p=0.023$). The mean attitude score was 21.46 ± 3.04 out of 30. While 72.7% expressed willingness to try remedies, 40% reported feelings of guilt during colic episodes. Younger mothers (18–24 years), those with lower educational attainment, and lower household income demonstrated significantly less favorable attitudes. Mothers with prior colic experience exhibited more positive attitudes ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Significant gaps exist in maternal knowledge and attitudes regarding infantile colic. Targeted educational interventions may improve coping strategies among mothers.

Keywords: *Infantile colic, knowledge, attitude, mothers*

Impact of food security on nutritional status among children aged 2–5 years attending clinics in Kandy following the 2022 economic crisis

Gunasekara HDNJ^{*}, Kulasekara MHB¹, Rajitha HGR¹, Rathnayake RMPM¹,
Navarathna WMSNK²

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*ninuragunasekara@gmail.com

Introduction: Sri Lanka's 2022 economic crisis severely disrupted household income and food access, placing young children at increased risk of malnutrition. Food security—consistent access to adequate, safe, and nutritious food—is a key determinant of child health in such settings.

Objectives: To assess the association between household food security and nutritional status among children aged 2–5 years attending clinics in Kandy, and to identify socio-demographic factors influencing food security.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 371 children and their caregivers attending three major hospitals in Kandy. Data were collected using a structured, pre-tested questionnaire based on the United States Food Security Survey Module. Nutritional status was assessed using standard anthropometric indices. Associations were analyzed using chi-square and Kruskal–Wallis tests.

Results: Food insecurity was highly prevalent, with 45.0% and 25.9% of households classified as having low and very low food security, respectively. The prevalence of stunting and underweight was 24.0% and 20.5%. Food insecurity showed a strong association with malnutrition ($p < 0.001$). Lower household income and larger family size were significantly associated with poorer food security, while child age and gender showed no significant association.

Conclusion: Food insecurity following the economic crisis was widespread and strongly associated with adverse nutritional outcomes among young children in Kandy. Socioeconomic vulnerability, particularly low income and larger household size, plays a critical role. These findings highlight the urgent need for targeted nutritional and social support interventions to mitigate the long-term impact on child health.

Keywords: *Food security, malnutrition, children, economic crisis*

Maternal knowledge, attitudes and practices on complementary feeding among children aged 6–24 months and their association with nutritional status at National Hospital Kandy - a hospital-based survey

Senanayake NSMJL^{1}, Imanjalee PT¹, Manurangi WAP¹, Randika DBA¹, Namgyal KS¹, Navaratna WMSNK²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*
²*Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*
 *januda3327.senanayake@gmail.com

Introduction: Optimal nutrition supports growth and development in the first two years, with complementary feeding at six months being essential.

Objective: To assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices on complementary feeding among mothers with children aged 6 – 24 months and their association with nutritional status in the National Hospital of Kandy.

Methods: A descriptive, analytical cross-sectional study was conducted with a nonprobability consecutive sampling technique. It involved 396 mother child pairs who attended pediatric clinics and wards of the National Hospital Kandy. Data were collected using a validated, pre-tested, interviewer-administered questionnaire. Anthropometric measurements of children were collected. Data were analyzed using SPSS 27.0. Data analysis was performed using non-parametric statistical tests. The Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis tests were used to compare groups, while Spearman's Rho correlation co-efficient was used to assess associations between variables.

Results: Mothers had moderate knowledge on complementary feeding (mean 9.53/11) with gaps in illness-related feeding and nutritional awareness, a favourable attitude (mean 7.47/8) and satisfactory practices (mean 8.31/11). Knowledge and practices were higher among mothers with greater education, higher income, and employment. Nutritional status identified 14.14% stunted, 19.7% wasted, 41.2% underweight, and 6% overweight children. Knowledge scores showed a weak but significant negative association with weight for age ($p=0.009$) and height for age z scores ($p=0.020$). A marginally significant association was found between practice scores and weight for age z scores ($p<0.001$) only.

Conclusion: Maternal education, income and employment significantly predicted enhanced complementary feeding practices and knowledge. Improved knowledge, attitudes and practices did not lead to better nutritional outcomes due to broader socio - environmental factors, indicating that information access and structural barriers should both be addressed.

Keywords: *Complementary feeding, maternal knowledge, attitudes and practices, nutritional status, children 6 – 24 months, Sri Lanka*

Knowledge and awareness of autism spectrum disorder and related misconceptions among mothers of children under five in central Sri Lanka

Piyathissa HMPP¹, Jinadasa WGTM^{1*}, Rathnayake WMPL¹, Wijesinghe HBIP¹,
Kiridena MGDVK²

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Srilanka

*themjinadasa@gmail.com

Introduction: Early diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and timely intervention can significantly enhance a child's development, social functioning, and communication skills. In Sri Lanka, however, the mean age of ASD diagnosis is markedly delayed, and poor maternal awareness is likely to be a contributory factor.

Objectives: To assess maternal knowledge and awareness regarding identification of ASD, related misconceptions, and associated factors in urban and rural settings in Central Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 400 mothers of children under five years attending immunization and child welfare clinics in selected urban and rural healthcare institutions, who were selected by convenience sampling. Data were collected using a validated interviewer-administered questionnaire. Knowledge and misconception scores were calculated. Mann - Whitney U, Kruskal - Wallis, and Spearman's rho tests were used to assess associations.

Results: Only 5.2% of participants demonstrated good knowledge, while 66.8% had very poor knowledge of ASD. Overall, 34.4% had previously heard of ASD, with no statistically significant difference of knowledge and awareness between urban and rural populations [$p(0.125) > 0.05$]. Education level in urban setting ($p_{\text{urban}}; 0.299$) Ethnicity ($p_{\text{urban}}; 0.398$ & $p_{\text{rural}}; 0.679$), employment status ($p_{\text{urban}}; 0.634$ & $p_{\text{rural}}; 0.337$), monthly income ($p_{\text{urban}}; 0.646$ & $p_{\text{rural}}; 0.404$), and number of children ($p_{\text{urban}}; 0.521$ & $p_{\text{rural}}; 0.187$) were not significantly associated with knowledge scores ($p > 0.05$) in either rural or urban setting. Although increasing age showed a positive trend (Spearman's rho significance: $p=0.05$), the association was not statistically significant [$p(0.995) > 0.05$] in the urban setting while in the rural setting education level was statistically significant predictor of knowledge [$p(0.031) < 0.05$]. Common misconceptions included attributing ASD to poor parenting. Among mothers who were aware of ASD, the primary information source was electronic media (67.9%), while 21.5% cited formal healthcare-based education.

Conclusions: Maternal awareness of ASD is markedly inadequate in both urban and rural settings in central Sri Lanka. Leveraging electronic media and strengthening structured education within maternal and child health services may improve early recognition and reduce diagnostic delays.

Key words: Autism spectrum disorder, maternal knowledge, awareness, misconceptions

Evaluation of early Digital Screen Exposure (DSE), its effects on language development and parental awareness of DSE in a cohort of children attending tertiary care hospitals in Kandy district, Sri Lanka

*Mahaulpotha W.M.M.T¹**, *Hettiarachchi H.D.H.H¹*, *Sandaruwani M.K.K.K¹*,
Ranasinghe W.R.A.T.D¹, *Jayampath A.K.S.A¹*, *Dissanayake P.V²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*[mihashheemahaulpotha@gmail.com](mailto:mahasheemahaulpotha@gmail.com)

Introduction: The first two years of life represent a critical period for neurodevelopment. Despite the World Health Organization(WHO) recommendation of zero screen time for children under two years, digital screen exposure (DSE) among young children continues to rise.

Objectives: This cross-sectional study, using retrospective parental recall, examined screen exposure up to 2 years of age, among children now aged between 2 and 5 years. Usage patterns (device, duration, content), reasons for use, parental awareness of risks, and potential association between screen time and speech delay were analyzed.

Methods: A cross-sectional study, using retrospective parental recall, was carried out and included 317 parents of children attending outpatient departments and well-baby clinics at tertiary care hospitals in the Kandy district. Data were collected using convenience sampling via self-administered questionnaires. Language skills were assessed using the milestone checklist in the Child Health Development Record. Children with global developmental disorders, sensory impairments, or syndromes were excluded. Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics software. The Chi-square test was used, with statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: Only 28.8% of children had no screen exposure during infancy. Among those exposed, smartphones (74.5%) and cartoons (84.5%) dominated. DSE was primarily motivated by perceived educational benefits (43.3%) and as a feeding distraction (42.2%). While many were aware of behavioral risks such as sleep disruption (41.3%), misconceptions exist, with 25.1% and 41.3% attributing DSE to Down syndrome and Autism, respectively. No statistically significant association was found between screen time and speech delay ($\chi^2 = 1.34$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.247$).

Conclusion: The high prevalence of early DSE and significant parental misconceptions highlight the urgent need for targeted parental education. Though statistically insignificant, the findings warrant larger-scale longitudinal studies to investigate long-term language impacts.

Keywords: *Digital screen exposure; Language development; Early childhood; Parental awareness; Tertiary care*

Comparison of knowledge and attitudes between mothers and fathers on childhood vaccination under the National Immunization Programme, who accompany children at Paediatric Clinic in Peradeniya Teaching Hospital

Gunarathna AU¹, Kalinda MHG^{1}, Perera ADK¹, Premathilaka SRSN¹,
Ranasooriya AHS¹, Fernando DMG²*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*²Department of Forensic Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**gavesh.kalinda.20@med.pdn.ac.lk*

Introduction: Childhood vaccination is vital for reducing global morbidity and mortality, yet vaccine hesitancy persists, influenced by parental knowledge and socio-demographics. Despite Sri Lanka's successful National Immunization Programme, disparities in parental perceptions remain. While mothers are traditionally primary caregivers, increasing paternal involvement necessitates a comparative analysis. This study compares maternal and paternal knowledge and attitudes toward childhood vaccination to identify gaps for targeted educational interventions.

Objectives: This descriptive cross-sectional study is aimed to compare the knowledge and attitudes of mothers and fathers regarding the National Immunization Programme (NIP) whose children are presented to paediatric clinic of Peradeniya Teaching Hospital.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at Peradeniya Teaching Hospital (December 16–29, 2024), targeting parents in the paediatric clinic. Using structured interviewer-administered questionnaires, knowledge and attitudes were assessed via Mukhtar et al.'s (2022) classification. Data were analyzed using SPSS via descriptive statistics, t-tests for normal distributions, and Mann-Whitney U tests for non-parametric comparisons.

Results: In this study (N=350; 175 mothers, 175 fathers), 55.7% of parents scored above the median knowledge score (14/30). Mothers demonstrated significantly higher knowledge than fathers (mean rank: 206.21 vs. 144.79, $p < 0.001$). Key gaps included identifying MMR coverage (62.9% correct) and booster dose importance (37.7% correct). While 38.6% expressed concerns regarding side effects, 87.4% agreed vaccines are safe and necessary. Mothers primarily relied on medical professionals for information, whereas fathers utilized family or media sources.

Conclusion: A significant gender gap exists in vaccination knowledge, with mothers displaying higher literacy and confidence. Despite generally positive attitudes, misconceptions regarding booster doses and contraindications persist. Educational interventions should target fathers to bridge this gap. Addressing side-effect concerns and reinforcing trust in the NIP are essential to mitigating vaccine hesitancy and achieving optimal immunization coverage.

Keywords: *Childhood vaccination, National Immunization Programme, mothers and fathers' comparison, parental knowledge and attitudes, vaccine hesitancy*

Parental knowledge about management of fever in paediatric patients

Withana WDCG¹, Jithmi SAS¹, Piyumika SYA¹, Samarathunga NPGNK¹
Thalgahagoda RS²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*gimhan.withana.20@med.pdn.ac.lk

Introduction: Fever is a common symptom in children and a frequent reason for medical consultation. Although typically benign, it often causes anxiety among parents, leading to inappropriate management and unnecessary healthcare visits. Misconceptions and limited understanding contribute significantly to this issue. This study evaluates parental knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs regarding fever management among caregivers attending the Outpatients Department at Sirimavo Bandaranaike Specialized Children's Hospital (SBSCH), Peradeniya.

Objectives: To assess parents' awareness and practices related to paediatric fever management and examine associations between knowledge levels and demographic or experiential factors.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 423 parents or guardians of paediatric patients visiting the outpatient department of SBSCH. Data were collected using a pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire covering demographics, knowledge, and attitudes toward fever management. Knowledge scores (0–10) were categorized as low (0–3), moderate (4–6), or high (7–10). Data analysis was performed using SPSS with descriptive statistics and chi-square tests.

Results: Among 384 respondents, most were aged 31–40 years (48.6%). Overall, 71.1% demonstrated high knowledge, 26% moderate, and only 2.9% low. The mean knowledge score was 7.33 (SD = 1.716). Significant associations were found between knowledge level and age, ethnicity, religion, education, and number of children, while marital and occupational status showed no significant relationship.

Conclusion: Parents showed generally good knowledge of fever management, though gaps persist among younger, less-educated, and minority caregivers. Targeted, culturally sensitive educational programs and improved healthcare communication are crucial to addressing misconceptions, promoting safe practices, and enhancing child health outcomes.

Key words: *Fever, Knowledge, Parents, Paediatric*

Assessment of knowledge and perceptions regarding childhood seizure first aid among parents accompanying their children to Sirimavo Bandaranaike Specialized Children's Hospital, Peradeniya

*Ravinthiran N¹**, *Khandu KY¹*, *Katugampola KACJ¹*, *Senarathna RRG¹*, *Fernando WIT²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*nerashikaravinthiran@gmail.com

Introduction: Seizures are common pediatric neurological emergencies where parental first aid significantly impacts health outcomes. However, misconceptions regarding causes and management can lead to improper handling and increased injury risk.

Objectives: To evaluate parental knowledge and perceptions of childhood seizure first aid and identify sociodemographic factors associated with these levels.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at Sirimavo Bandaranaike Specialized Children's Hospital, Peradeniya. Using consecutive sampling, a questionnaire was administered to parents in outpatient departments and pediatric wards. Data were analyzed using statistical software, with chi-square tests identifying associations between categorical variables and knowledge scores.

Results: Only 8.6% of parents demonstrated high knowledge, while 44.6% had low knowledge. Misconceptions were prevalent; 64.1% incorrectly believed objects should be placed in a seizing child's mouth. Knowledge significantly correlated with education level (probability value [p] < 0.001) and spending over four hours with children on weekends (p = 0.003), while gender and income showed no impact (p > 0.05). Independent Student's t-test comparisons revealed significantly higher knowledge in parents with prior family exposure (p = 0.026). Regarding perceptions, 94.9% of parents had a high perception of childhood seizures, but only 24.4% felt confident to provide aid. Chi-square analysis revealed no statistically significant associations between perception levels and any examined demographic factors (p > 0.05). However, perception levels were significantly higher among parents whose children had experienced seizures (p = 0.034), individuals with close family members who had seizures (p = 0.007), and those spending over four hours with children on weekdays (p = 0.002), compared with their respective counterparts.

Conclusions: There is a critical gap between recognizing seizure urgency and possessing actionable first aid knowledge. The prevalence of harmful practices like mouth-loading emphasizes the urgent need for targeted, community-based educational interventions to empower caregivers.

Keywords: *seizures, first aid, parental knowledge, misconceptions, Sri Lanka.*

Comparison of histopathological and clinical diagnosis of benign uterine conditions in patients admitted to the gynecological wards in Teaching Hospital Peradeniya

*Renisha RP¹**, *Bhagya JHN¹*, *Chathurapriya DN¹*, *Madhusankha KWSD¹*,
Weerasinghe MDUS¹, *Gnanarathne S²*, *Tennakoon TMAH³*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

³*Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*suzanepeter2001@gmail.com

Introduction: Benign Uterine Conditions (BUCs) are common causes of morbidity and infertility among women. Regular clinicopathological correlation provides valuable insights into diagnostic challenges, improving diagnostic accuracy and management.

Objectives: This study aimed to assess the concordance between clinical and histopathological diagnoses of BUCs and to evaluate symptom patterns in patients lacking a definitive clinical diagnosis.

Methods: A retrospective, descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted from November 2023 to November 2024. A total of 366 histopathologically confirmed cases of BUCs admitted to the Teaching Hospital Peradeniya were analyzed using histopathology reports, requisition forms and bed head tickets. For cases with definitive clinical diagnoses (n=279), concordance, sensitivity, specificity, positive predictive value and negative predictive value were calculated. In cases without a provisional diagnosis (n=87), symptom patterns were cross tabulated with final histopathological findings.

Results: Out of 366 patients in the study: 76.2% (n=279) had a definitive clinical diagnosis, while 23.8% (n=87) did not have a provisional diagnosis. Most patients were perimenopausal (54.09%; n=198). The overall clinicopathological concordance was 84.3%. Uterine fibroids were the most frequently diagnosed condition both clinically and histopathologically (concordance 77.7%, sensitivity 77.1%). Endometrial hyperplasia had the highest concordance (96.4%), while adenomyosis showed the lowest (68.4%). Heavy menstrual bleeding (36.7%; n=32) was the most common symptom among patients without a specific clinical diagnosis. Overlapping symptoms among fibroids, adenomyosis, and endometrial polyps contributed to diagnostic uncertainty.

Conclusion: The findings underscore the limitations of symptom-based clinical diagnosis in BUCs. Conditions like adenomyosis and endometrial polyps are often underdiagnosed due to overlapping presentations, stressing the need for histopathological confirmation. Routine clinicopathological correlation is essential for enhancing diagnostic precision and ensuring optimal management of BUCs, particularly in cases with overlapping clinical symptoms.

Key words: *Benign uterine conditions, clinical diagnosis, histopathological correlation*

Knowledge, attitude and practices on contraceptives and abortion with regards to unplanned pregnancies in Kandy district, Sri Lanka.

Shanaka KJS^{1}, Widanagamage NG¹, Fasra MSHF¹, De Silva SWDD¹,
Nanayakkara MKSIS¹,
Gihan MC²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**javindusenuranga@gmail.com*

Introduction: Unplanned pregnancies and abortions remain major global concerns, contributing to maternal morbidity and mortality. Despite widespread awareness of contraceptives and reproductive health, effective contraceptive use is often hindered by misinformation, fears about side effects and cultural norms. These barriers can lead to abortion or other pregnancy-related complications.

Objectives: The general objective of this study was to assess knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) regarding contraceptives and abortion in the context of unintended pregnancies among patients attending the obstetrics and gynaecology wards and clinics at Teaching Hospital Peradeniya and the National Hospital Kandy.

Methods: A cross-sectional qualitative study was conducted among 428 patients. Data were collected using a validated, interviewer-administered structured questionnaire. Face and content validation were used to ensure instrument reliability. Socio-demographic data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and t-tests were applied to assess associations between socio-demographic factors and KAP scores.

Results: Overall, 69.2% of participants demonstrated basic knowledge of contraceptives, with a moderate mean knowledge score. While general attitudes towards contraception were favourable, over 70% of participants expressed concerns about side effects. Despite positive attitudes, more than 40% had never used artificial contraception, and over half were not engaging in effective contraceptive practices. Regarding abortion, although most participants were aware of its health implications, nearly half were unaware of the legal status of abortion in Sri Lanka. Significant associations were found between educational level, religion and participants' knowledge and attitudes.

Conclusion: There is an urgent need for comprehensive reproductive health education programmes in Sri Lanka which provide factual information about contraceptive methods and address emotional, cultural and religious concerns, fears about side effects and common misconceptions. Incorporate couple-based counselling to promote shared responsibility in contraceptive use. Strengthening school-based education and community engagement is essential in reducing unplanned pregnancies and reducing abortions.

Keywords: *unplanned pregnancy, abortion, contraceptives, Sri Lanka*

Knowledge of breast cancer among female teachers in national schools in the Kandy educational zone

Hashara HGO^{1}, Fernando HWMDN¹, Madushani WN¹, Piyumali HMSK¹,
Dissanayaka DMS¹, Dharmaratne SD²*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

**omeshigamage@gmail.com*

Introduction: Breast cancer is the commonest cancer among Sri Lankan women and a leading cause of cancer mortality worldwide. Early detection significantly improves outcomes. This study assessed awareness of breast cancer among female national schoolteachers in the Kandy educational zone, focusing on risk factors, early warning signs, and breast self-examination.

Objectives: To assess the level of knowledge of breast cancer among female teachers in national schools under the Kandy educational zone, emphasizing early warning signs, risk factors, and breast self-examination.

Method: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 389 female teachers in national schools in the Kandy educational zone. Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire covering knowledge of risk factors, early signs, and breast self-examination. Participants were selected using random sampling from multiple schools. Data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS version 26. Ethical approval was obtained from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.

Results: Most participants were Sinhala (91.3%) and Buddhists (88.9%), with 35.5% aged around 50 years. While 66.6% had good knowledge of early warning signs, only 26.7% had good knowledge of risk factors and 32.6% of breast self-examination. A breast lump was the most recognized symptom (71.2%), while pain was least recognized (50.6%). Family history (55.8%) and radiation exposure (56.6%) were the best-known risk factors. Knowledge of reproductive and lifestyle-related factors such as early menarche, obesity, and late childbearing was low. Awareness of breast self-examination methods and timing was inadequate, with only 20.1% knowing correct age to begin.

Conclusion: Overall knowledge of breast cancer among female teachers was unsatisfactory. Although awareness of early warning signs was adequate, knowledge of risk factors and breast self-examination was poor. Improving awareness, particularly regarding modifiable risk factors and breast self-examination, is essential.

Keywords: *Awareness, knowledge, breast cancer, risk factors, early warning signs, breast self-examination, female, schoolteachers*

Association between pregnancy induced hypertension in anemic pregnant women of age 20-35: Case Control Study.

Subasinghe SASW¹, Sirisena HMV¹, Nihara JLS¹, Jayathilaka MJK¹, Rathnayake PM¹,
Gnarathna S²*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²Department of obstetrics and gynecology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

**saradawaruna@gmail.com*

Introduction: Maternal and fetal morbidity and death are significantly influenced by pregnancy-induced hypertension and anemia. In Sri Lanka, both circumstances are very common. Nonetheless, there is conflicting data about a potential link between anemia and pregnancy induced hypertension.

Objectives: The purpose of this study is to evaluate the relationship between anaemia and pregnancy-induced hypertension and to evaluate the relationship between anaemia and dietary and socioeconomic determinants, in first-time pregnant women in the Pannala Medical Officer of Health who are between the ages of 20 and 35.

Methods: 163 pregnant women participated in a descriptive cross-sectional study. Prenatal clinic records provided information on blood pressure and hemoglobin levels. Questionnaires given by interviewers were utilized to gather data on socioeconomic traits and eating habits. Standard prenatal hemoglobin cut-off levels were used to define anaemia. Fisher's exact and chi-square tests were used for statistical analysis, with a significance level of $p < 0.05$.

Results: 79.1% of subjects had anaemia, while 4.3% had hypertension brought on by pregnancy. Anemic mothers had a slightly greater prevalence of pregnancy-induced hypertension (4.7%) than non-anemic mothers (2.9%), although the difference was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Anaemia was significantly correlated with nutritional status ($p < 0.001$), especially with low intake of red meat, green leafy vegetables, and foods high in iron. Additionally, a significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) was seen between anaemia and lower monthly household income. However, there was no discernible correlation with educational attainment.

Conclusion: Maternal anaemia was highly correlated with dietary and socioeconomic variables, however there was no discernible direct link between anaemia and pregnancy-induced hypertension. To lessen the burden of maternal anaemia, targeted interventions that emphasize dietary improvement and financial support are crucial.

Keywords: *Diet, socio economic factors, anemia, pregnancy induced hypertension, primi gravidae*

Awareness of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Among Female Advanced Level Students in the Kandy Municipal Area

Imendra KGIU¹, Karunarathne PWJW¹, Ranasinghe UDG¹, Sawbhagya WAK¹, Kandauda KIC²*

¹*Faculty of medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.*

²*Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.*

**imorduthpalal@gmail.com*

Introduction: Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a common endocrine disorder in women of reproductive age, associated with reproductive, metabolic, and psychological complications. Awareness of PCOS is essential for early detection, prevention of long-term consequences, and promotion of reproductive health.

Objectives: This study aimed to assess awareness and knowledge of PCOS among female Advanced Level (A/L) students in the municipal area of Kandy, focusing on symptoms, risk factors, complications, diagnostic and treatment methods, and sources of information.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 422 female A/L students aged ≥ 18 years from four girls' schools in Kandy. Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire in Sinhala, Tamil, and English, following ethical approval (2024/EC/SP/38). Descriptive statistics and chi-square tests were applied using SPSS to analyze the association between awareness and variables such as academic stream, menstrual regularity, family income, and maternal education.

Results: Among participants, 37.0% were from the science stream, followed by commerce (22.5%), arts (21.1%), and mathematics (19.4%). Only 14.9% (n=63) reported being aware of PCOS. The internet was the predominant source of information (50.6%), while schools, healthcare providers, and family contributed minimally. Awareness of causes (6.7%), outcomes (7.4%), complications (3.6%), diagnostic methods (4.0%), and treatments (4.5%) was very low. Arts (25.84%) and commerce (20%) students demonstrated higher awareness than mathematics students (3.65%). Students with irregular menstrual cycles, higher family income, and mothers with advanced education showed slightly better awareness. Knowledge of specific causes and outcomes, including obesity, irregular menstruation, infertility, and acne, was limited, highlighting substantial gaps in reproductive health education.

Conclusion: In conclusion, awareness of PCOS among female A/L students in Kandy is low, revealing an urgent need for targeted school-based health education and community interventions. Structured awareness programs are recommended to enhance knowledge, promote early detection, and reduce long-term reproductive and metabolic complications.

Keywords: *Polycystic ovarian syndrome, awareness, female, Advanced Level students, reproductive health, Kandy municipal area, Sri Lanka*

Awareness of postpartum depression among mothers admitted to antenatal wards in two tertiary care hospitals in Kandy District

Rajakaruna RMAUI¹, Bandara WMTN¹, Dakshika KTT¹, Malshani SD¹,
Welagedara UWMBYO¹, Kudagammana ST², Dematawa HMPU²*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*²Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**induwara20rajakaruna@gmail.com*

Introduction: Postpartum depression (PPD) is a significant mental health concern that affects mothers after childbirth, with implications for both maternal and child well-being. Despite its prevalence, maternal awareness of PPD in Sri Lanka has not yet been thoroughly assessed. Adequate knowledge about PPD is essential for early identification and effective management.

Objectives: To assess awareness of PPD among mothers admitted to antenatal wards in two tertiary care hospitals in Kandy District, Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study using convenience sampling was conducted in the antenatal wards of National Hospital Kandy and Teaching Hospital Peradeniya. A self-administered pre-validated questionnaire was used to collect data on participants' demographic characteristics, sources of knowledge about PPD, and their awareness regarding PPD. A knowledge score was calculated. Statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 30.

Results: The study included 416 participants. The majority were non-employed (74.8%) and rural residents (88.5%), and the mean age was 29.16 years. The internet and mass media were identified as primary sources of knowledge. Of the participants, 44.5% had not previously encountered information about PPD. Among the remaining 55.5%, the mean knowledge score was 3.50 (SD = 0.45). Significant associations were identified between PPD knowledge and residence, education level, number of living children, number of visits to obstetrics and gynaecology clinics, number of sources of PPD information, and the use of the internet as a source, with notably lower awareness among non-employed, rural residents, those with lower education levels, those with more than one child, and non-users of the internet.

Conclusion: A significant proportion of participants had not been previously exposed to PPD information, while those with exposure demonstrated varying levels of knowledge. Implementing measures to enhance maternal awareness of PPD is crucial.

Keywords: *Postpartum depression, maternal awareness, antenatal mothers, mental health literacy, Sri Lanka*

Prevalence of depression in secondary school teachers among Type 1AB National Schools in the Gangawata Korale Educational Zone, Kandy, and its association with socio-demographic factors and stress

Devanarayana OSH¹, Wickramasinghe WAVB^{1}, Dasantha MAH¹, Rikaza ARF¹, Malwatta MDDH¹, Navaratna WMSNK²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**vramasinghe.20ihan.wick@med.pdn.ac.lk*

Introduction: Depression is a mental illness causing persistent sadness, low mood, and reduced motivation, affecting daily life.

Objectives: To determine the prevalence and associated factors of depression in secondary school teachers in Type 1AB schools in Gangawata Korale education zone, Kandy.

Methods: A descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted with 378 teachers. A pretested, self-administered questionnaire was given to teachers with items seeking information on socio demographic factors, work-related factors, depression and stress (Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale 21). Data were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Kruskal Wallis test was used to explore associations between variables.

Results: The study revealed that 8.1% of secondary school teachers in Gangawata Korale exhibited symptoms of depression according to the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale 21, while 4% reported experiencing stress. The analysis revealed statistically significant associations between age and the prevalence of depression among secondary school teachers in Gangawata Korale ($p=0.03$), and between teaching grades, with teachers teaching grades 12 and 13 showing a significantly different prevalence compared to those teaching grades 6–9 and 9–10 ($p=0.006$). Several work-related factors, including student performance issues ($p=0.018$), inadequate classroom resources ($p=0.007$), heavy workload ($p=0.001$), poor work–life balance ($p=0.000$), and pressure from parents and community expectations ($p=0.000$), showed statistically significant associations with depression among teachers.

Conclusion: Depression among secondary school teachers was associated with several socio-demographic and occupational factors as well as stress. Future studies may include larger samples across different regions in Sri Lanka and qualitative approaches.

Keywords: *Depression, secondary school teachers, prevalence, occupational stress*

Evaluation of physical, mental, and cognitive status of post intensive care patients in Teaching Hospital Peradeniya

Wickramasinghe, WDRNM¹, Samaraweera, SMPD¹, Dayas, AAIS¹, Dissanayake, DMRT¹, Nanayakkara, BGVS¹, Pinto V²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Anesthesiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*ranujawick1@gmail.com

Introduction: Intensive care unit (ICU) survivors experience physical, mental, and cognitive impairments collectively known as Post-Intensive Care Syndrome, which can significantly diminish their quality of life. Despite global efforts, research on its burden and risk factors in Sri Lanka is limited.

Objectives: Assess post-ICU patients' physical, mental, and cognitive status and their association with ICU management.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted among 50 post-ICU patients who met the inclusion criteria at Teaching Hospital Peradeniya. Validated tools were used to assess physical status using the Barthel Index (BI) and Handheld Dynamometry (HHD), mental status using the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) and Generalised Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7), and cognitive status using the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE). Outcomes were analysed in relation to ICU management variables and demographic factors. Stepwise regression analysis was performed using Jamovi.

Results: MMSE scores were lower in patients receiving invasive ventilation ($\beta = -3.46$, $p = 0.01$) and higher in non-septic patients. ($\beta = 3.45$, $p = 0.01$). GAD-7 scores were influenced by age ($\beta = -0.10$, $p = 0.01$), trauma admission ($\beta = -9.99$, $p = 0.01$), invasive ventilation ($\beta = 3.16$, $p = 0.03$), and sepsis management ($\beta = -4.96$, $p = 0.002$). HHD scores were higher in trauma ($\beta = 33.65$, $p < 0.001$) and non-septic patients ($\beta = 5.53$, $p = 0.02$), BI score declined with age ($\beta = -0.70$, $p = 0.01$) and ICU stay duration ($\beta = -1.38$, $p = 0.02$).

Conclusion: Invasive ventilation, sepsis management, duration of ICU stay, and age significantly influenced the physical, mental, and cognitive outcomes of ICU survivors in this study. These findings emphasize early risk stratification to identify vulnerable patients and implement structured follow-up and rehabilitation. Multicenter studies with longer follow-up are needed to validate these findings and guide post-ICU care.

Keywords: *ICU survivors, post-intensive care syndrome in Sri Lanka, ICU management*

Physical disability and psychosocial impact of chronic lymphedema assessed using the SF-36 health survey in patients attending the vascular clinic at the Teaching Hospital Peradeniya.

Sardhan MSM¹, Habaragamuwa HSU¹, Rahma HMGKMR¹, Karunarathna SVMPM¹, Rathnayake RMJBS²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

* sardanmsm2001@gmail.com

Introduction: Chronic lymphedema significantly impacts the health-related quality of life (HRQoL) of patients. This study evaluates the influence of sociodemographic, economic, and clinical features on HRQoL among chronic lymphedema patients using the SF-36 health survey.

Objectives: To assess the physical disability and psychosocial impact of chronic lymphedema in patients attending the vascular clinic at the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya (THP), using the SF-36 health survey, and to evaluate the association of sociodemographic, economic, and clinical factors with these impacts.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at the vascular clinic of THP from December 2024 to March 2025. Using a census sampling method, all eligible patients with chronic lymphedema were recruited (n = 62). Data were collected through an interviewer-administered questionnaire, using the translated SF-36 Health Survey, along with relevant sociodemographic and clinical variables. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 30.0, applying appropriate parametric and non-parametric tests.

Results: Physical health was more impaired than mental health (The mean Physical Component Summary (PCS) score 47.82 vs Mental Component Summary (MCS) score 56.46). Lower scores were observed for role limitations due to physical health, emotional problems, bodily pain, and general health. Participants ≥ 60 years had significantly lower physical functioning scores ($p < 0.05$), and advanced lymphedema stages were associated with poorer general health ($p = 0.009$). Most other associations were not statistically significant, though females showed a trend toward higher domain scores. Nearly half (48.4%) believed their health to worsen.

Conclusion: Chronic lymphedema was found to moderately affect HRQoL, with greater impairment in physical domains. Older age and advanced disease stage were linked to poorer outcomes, emphasizing the importance of early detection and holistic management strategies to improve both physical functioning and emotional well-being in affected individuals.

Keywords: *Chronic lymphedema, health-related quality of life, SF-36 health survey, physical component summary, mental component summary*

Limited joint mobility syndrome among patients with diabetes and its association with age and gender in a hospital-based population in Kandy district

Sureshkumar M¹, Chamindi GGBN¹, Liyanage GLAK¹, Vishagarabavan T¹,
Wijesiri GKGD¹, Dissanayake JK²*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*²Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**miruthysureshkumar2@gmail.com*

Introduction: Limited Joint Mobility Syndrome (LJMS) is a musculoskeletal complication of diabetes mellitus characterized by joint stiffness, skin thickening, and functional impairment, mainly affecting the hands. Despite the high prevalence of diabetes in Sri Lanka, LJMS remains inadequately studied.

Objectives: To determine the occurrence of LJMS and its associations with age, gender, and duration of diabetes among patients attending diabetic clinics at National Hospital Kandy (NHK) and Teaching Hospital Peradeniya (THP).

Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted at NHK and THP from November 25 to December 8, 2024. A total of 267 patients aged ≥ 18 years were recruited using consecutive sampling. Patients with congenital hand deformities, inflammatory arthritis, or recent hand trauma were excluded. Data were collected using an interviewer-administered questionnaire and clinical examination, including the Prayer Sign and Tabletop Sign. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and Kruskal-Wallis tests.

Results: The mean age was 58.53 years (SD \pm 13.47), with 73.4% females. LJMS features included skin changes (29.96%), painless stiffness (24.34%), and fixed flexion contractures predominantly affecting proximal interphalangeal joints (12.73% mild, 0.75% significant). Functional impairment included grip difficulty (16.85%) and fine movement challenges (10.49%). The total occurrence of LJMS was 20.22%. The Prayer Sign was positive in 20% and doubtful in 4%, while the Tabletop Sign was positive in 6% and doubtful in 10%. Painless stiffness was significantly associated with Prayer Sign ($p = 0.006$) and Tabletop Sign ($p = 0.039$), and skin changes with Prayer Sign ($p = 0.007$). Females and individuals >60 years showed higher LJMS prevalence, though no significant sex differences were found for diagnostic tests ($p = 0.835$; $p = 0.289$). Duration of diabetes was significantly associated with both Prayer Sign and Tabletop Sign ($p = 0.012$).

Conclusion: LJMS is prevalent among diabetic patients in Kandy. The Prayer Sign demonstrated stronger associations than the Tabletop Sign. Higher occurrence among females and older patients highlights the importance of targeted screening. Painless stiffness and skin changes may precede positive Prayer and Tabletop Signs, suggesting their value in early detection and prevention of progression to complete LJMS.

Keywords: *Limited Joint Mobility Syndrome, Diabetes Mellitus, Prayer Sign, Tabletop Sign, Kandy, Sri Lanka*

Self-care of diabetic foot ulcers in the Kandy district: a cross-sectional study

Fernando WSD^{1}, de Zoysa HDL¹, Nashira MNF¹, Silva HNN¹, Wijayapriya RAN¹,
Dassanayake B²*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*²Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**fernandostina2001@gmail.com*

Introduction: Inadequate self-care demonstrably contributes to the development of diabetic foot ulcers, and poor health literacy worsens the prognosis. Effective self-care of diabetic foot ulcers hastens healing and reduces the risk of hospitalization. We investigated possible individual demographic and clinical variables influencing the extent of knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) regarding diabetic foot ulcer self-care, to assess the need for holistic approaches in educating such patients.

Objectives: To assess the KAP of diabetic foot ulcer prevention and management among diabetic patients in the Kandy district, and factors that affected these.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was performed with 413 adult diabetic patients admitted to surgical wards and attending surgical clinics of selected hospitals in the Kandy district, using a pre-tested, interviewer-administered questionnaire consisting of four parts, which investigated individual details and assessed KAP of participants. Associations between individual-level variables and KAP scores were examined using Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests.

Results: Out of total possible scores for knowledge, attitudes, and practices being 17, 5, and 9 respectively, the overall median scores were 12, 5, and 5. Knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding diabetic foot ulcer self-care were positively correlated, with moderate correlations observed between knowledge and attitudes ($r = 0.343$, $p < 0.001$) and knowledge and practices ($r = 0.360$, $p < 0.001$), and a weaker correlation between attitudes and practices ($r = 0.246$, $p < 0.001$). Higher KAP scores were associated with several demographic, clinical, and social factors, most consistently a higher level of education, adequate income, and absence of a caregiver across all domains.

Conclusions: Our results pointed towards a lack of knowledge regarding and noncompliance with practices recommended for diabetic feet by many, despite having overall positive attitudes. This highlights the need for proper patient education regarding proactive diabetic foot self-care.

Keywords: *Diabetes, foot ulcer, self-care*

Knowledge and awareness of peripheral arterial disease among diabetic patients attending Teaching Hospital Peradeniya and National Hospital Kandy

Surinda RPK^{1*}, Herath WHMSA¹, Navodya PGM¹, Wijenayake WMLU¹,
Deshappriya HAKH¹, Samarasinghe AKBTTB²

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*kavindu1000@gmail.com

Introduction: Peripheral arterial disease is a significant, yet under-recognized complication of diabetes mellitus. If left untreated, it may lead to severe outcomes such as critical limb ischemia and amputation. Early detection is crucial for the prevention of such consequences; however, this requires diabetic patients to have proper knowledge and awareness of the disease. However, adequate assessment of awareness and knowledge of peripheral arterial disease among diabetic patients in Sri Lanka is lacking.

Objectives: The purpose of this study was to assess the awareness and knowledge of peripheral arterial disease among diabetic patients attending National Hospital Kandy and Teaching Hospital Peradeniya.

Methodology: We carried out a descriptive cross-sectional study among diabetic patients in medical, surgical wards and patients attending diabetic clinics at Teaching Hospital Peradeniya and National Hospital Kandy. A total of 423 patients who met the inclusion criteria were recruited using the consecutive sampling method. Data on awareness, knowledge, co-morbidities, information sources and demographics were collected using a pre-tested interviewer-administered questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, the chi-square test, the ANOVA test and simple linear regression were used to analyze the data, with significance set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: Only 50.6% of participants were aware of peripheral arterial disease. The mean knowledge score regarding risk factors and complications of peripheral arterial disease was 36.84% among the participants. Higher educational levels and employment in the healthcare sector were found to be significantly associated with high awareness and knowledge scores.

Conclusion: This study found that awareness and knowledge of peripheral arterial disease among diabetic patients in two major hospitals in Sri Lanka were generally low. The findings highlight the need to integrate education about the disease in routine diabetic clinics, using simple terminology, practical methods and giving priority to the less educated and people who are employed outside the healthcare sector.

Keywords: *Peripheral arterial disease, diabetes mellitus, knowledge, awareness*

Prevalence of oral candida in a cohort of patients treated for diabetic foot ulcer disease

Senevirathne SMST¹, Marasinghe MPM¹, Indrachapa BAS¹, Rashatha AST¹,
Mendha Tshomo Gyeltshen¹, Peiris SPM², Jayathilaka JAMS³*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*²Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya,
Sri Lanka*

*³Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Dental Sciences, University of
Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**thilinaka.senevirathne.20@med.pdn.ac.lk*

Introduction: Oral candidiasis is more likely in uncontrolled diabetics, especially those with diabetic foot ulcers (DFU), due to high salivary glucose, immune dysfunction, and chronic infection.

Objectives: This study assessed the prevalence of carriage of oral *Candida* and the associated factors among patients treated for DFU.

Methods: A cross-sectional analysis was conducted among 124 adults receiving DFU treatment at two private medical institutes in Kandy. Data on sociodemographic, medical, lifestyle, and oral health factors were collected through a validated questionnaire, while oral rinse samples were cultured on SDA and assessed for *Candida* species and colony-forming unit (CFU) density. Oral *Candida* carriage was determined by CFU/ml. DFU severity was classified using the Wagner system. Data were analysed in IBM SPSS 30.0 using descriptive and comparative statistics. Oral *Candida* counts were classified as no growth, commensal growth, increased colony count, or suspected oral candidiasis. Significance level was set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: Increased oral *Candida* density was found in 31.4%–38.9% of participants. DFU severity was significantly associated with *Candida* carriage ($p = 0.007$), with higher Wagner grades showing higher CFU counts. Recent antibiotic use was also linked to increased colonies ($p = 0.010$). Non-adherence to diabetic dietary advice showed a higher prevalence (38.9%) but was marginally non-significant ($p = 0.065$). No significant associations were observed with demographics, medication type, substance use, or oral hygiene.

Conclusion: Overall, oral *Candida* carriage is high in DFU patients and appears to be linked to greater ulcer severity and recent antibiotic use. This study emphasizes the need for integrated DFU care including oral health monitoring, antibiotic stewardship, dietary guidance and patient education. Future studies with larger samples are recommended.

Keywords: *diabetic foot ulcers, oral Candida carriage, prevalence*

Describing the socio-demographic characteristics, prescribed medicines, investigations and out-of-pocket cost among patients attending the diabetic clinic at National Hospital Kandy: a cross-sectional study

Priyadarshana PKSS^{1}, Ratnayake RMYSB¹, Sandeepani JTI¹, Kamshavi T¹, Dharmaratne SD²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**shashithshehan2001@gmail.com*

Introduction: Diabetes mellitus causes major health and financial burden among Sri Lankan patients.

Objectives: Describe the socio-demographic characteristics, prescribed medicines, requested investigations, and the out-of-pocket expenditure of patients attending the diabetic clinic at the National Hospital, Kandy, over a two-week period.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 423 diabetic patients aged 20–90 years attending the National Hospital Kandy diabetic clinic over two weeks. All patients who met the inclusion criteria were invited to the research until the desired sample size was achieved. After informed consent, data were collected using a pre-tested interviewer-administered questionnaire covering socio-demographics, medications, investigations, and costs, available in Sinhala, Tamil, and English. Data were analyzed using Excel and SPSS with univariate analysis.

Results: Most participants were female (74.2%), aged 51–60 years, with 63.1% educated up to Ordinary Level and 35.9% unemployed. Insulin use was reported by 28.8% (Mixtard most common), while Metformin 500 mg was the most frequently prescribed oral drug. About 25.5% purchased medications from private pharmacies. Although routine investigations were common, 45.2% relied on private laboratories. The mean monthly out-of-pocket cost was Rs.1,966.98, mainly for investigations, medications, transport, and consultations. Only 0.8% had insurance coverage.

Conclusion: This study highlights the substantial out-of-pocket financial burden among diabetic patients attending the diabetic clinic at National Hospital Kandy despite receiving government healthcare. Costs for investigations, medications, transport, and private services create ongoing economic pressure, particularly for unemployed and middle-aged patients. The frequent use of private laboratories and pharmacies, together with very low insurance coverage, reflects gaps in affordability and access to diabetic care. These findings can guide policymakers to strengthen public-sector availability of investigations and medications and implement strategies to reduce the financial burden of diabetes management in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Diabetes mellitus, out-of-pocket expenditure, socio-demographic characteristics, medicines, investigations*

**Patients' knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding pharmacotherapy in
Diabetes Mellitus at a tertiary care hospital in Sri Lanka**

Jayalath RP¹, Pathirana HPKC¹, Premathilake PHLP¹, Dilhari GUD¹, Godakanda
CNG¹, Dalugama C²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**radinjayalath21@gmail.com*

Introduction: Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a leading cause of morbidity in Sri Lanka, and effective pharmacotherapy is vital to prevent complications. Patient knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) influence adherence and outcomes, yet locally relevant data from tertiary care settings remain limited. This study provides contextual insights to support patient education and counseling.

Objectives: To assess diabetic patients' KAP regarding pharmacotherapy at a tertiary care hospital in Sri Lanka and examine associations with demographic factors.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 363 adult patients with diabetes attending the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya. Data were collected using a validated, pretested self-administered questionnaire. Knowledge and practice were evaluated using binary scoring, and attitudes on a 5-point Likert scale. Scores were categorized as poor/fair (unsatisfactory) or good/excellent (satisfactory) using Bloom's criteria. Data were analyzed with SPSS v27 (Chi-square, ANOVA, Pearson correlation) at $p < 0.05$. Ethical approval was obtained from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.

Results: Among participants, 31.1% demonstrated satisfactory knowledge, 13.8% satisfactory attitudes, and 92.3% satisfactory practices. Education level significantly influenced attitudes and practices ($p < 0.05$), while marital status correlated with both ($p = 0.035$, $p = 0.015$). Weak but significant inverse correlations were found between knowledge and attitude ($r = -0.129$) and between attitude and practice ($r = -0.117$). Although statistically significant, these relationships were clinically trivial, indicating minimal practical impact.

Conclusion: Despite good adherence, notable gaps exist in patients' knowledge and attitudes toward pharmacotherapy. The weak yet significant correlations highlight the need for educational interventions and individualized counseling, especially for less-educated patients to enhance understanding and promote evidence-based diabetes care in Sri Lankan tertiary settings.

Keywords: *Attitudes, knowledge, practices, pharmacotherapy, tertiary care*

Assessing knowledge, attitude and practices related to western and alternative hypoglycemic medication among type II diabetic patients in tertiary care hospitals in Kandy district

Raguraj T^{1}, Kaushalya AD¹, Gunarathna GDMV¹, Rajapaksha RCS¹, Gamage SY¹, Pathirage LPMMK²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*ragurajthev@gmail.com

Introduction: Diabetes mellitus is a chronic condition that is managed mainly by pharmacotherapy. Patients' knowledge, attitude and practices regarding the western and alternative hypoglycemic medications can shape the patients' treatment adherence and outcomes.

Objectives: This study aims to assess the knowledge, attitude and practices regarding Western and alternative hypoglycemic medication among type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) inpatient patients in tertiary care hospitals in Kandy district and identify associated socio-demographic factors.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted at the Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya and National Hospital, Kandy by an interviewer-administered questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the cohort characteristics and the chi-square tests were performed to find the association among variables.

Results: Majority of the population (n=451) have high knowledge (61.9%) positive attitude (43.2%) and good practices (57%) about western medication. Knowledge score was significantly associated with gender, educational status, monthly income, duration of disease and family history of disease ($p < 0.05$), attitude score was significantly associated with age, religion, monthly income and duration of disease and practices score was significantly associated with gender, educational status, religion, monthly income and duration of disease ($p < 0.05$). Significant association is seen between knowledge and attitude and practices ($p < 0.001$). Majority of the population has high knowledge (45.2%), negative attitude (58.8%) and poor practices (48.8%) about alternative medication. Knowledge score has significant association with religion, educational status, employment, monthly income, duration of diabetes, attitude has significant association with gender, religion and duration of diabetes ($p < 0.05$). There is no statistical association between practices and socio-demographic factors. Knowledge was significantly associated with attitude but not with practices.

Conclusion: While KAP regarding western medications was generally favorable, there was marked skepticism and poor engagement with alternative therapies. Tailored educational interventions, targeting low-income and less-educated populations, along with professional counselling may enhance adherence and treatment outcomes.

Keywords: *Diabetes mellitus, western medication, alternative medication, knowledge-attitude-practices*

Knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding dietary and fluid management among stage five chronic kidney disease patients undergoing haemodialysis in Kandy, Sri Lanka

Bandaranayake BMDS¹, Dilanka KGH¹, Kahagalla KGYB¹, Pahasara KGP^{1}, Herath HMST¹, Dissanayake K²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**pasindupahasara50@gmail.com*

Introduction: Stage five chronic kidney disease patients undergoing haemodialysis require strict dietary and fluid management to prevent complications and improve quality of life. Adequate knowledge, positive attitudes and appropriate practices are essential for effective self-management.

Objectives: To assess the knowledge, attitude and practices regarding dietary and fluid management among stage five chronic kidney disease patients undergoing haemodialysis and to determine the association of socio-demographic factors and duration of dialysis with knowledge, attitude and practice scores.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 218 patients undergoing haemodialysis at National Hospital, Kandy and Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya. Data were collected using a pre-tested interviewer-administered questionnaire. Knowledge, attitude and practice scores were calculated and categorized. Associations were analysed using independent t-test and one-way analysis of variance.

Results: The mean knowledge score was 22.03 (standard deviation 7.06). Majority (71.6%) demonstrated moderate knowledge, while 16.5% had high knowledge. Mean attitude and practice scores were 19.31 (standard deviation 3.15) and 18.75 (standard deviation 3.89) respectively, indicating generally positive attitudes and practices. Knowledge scores showed significant associations with ethnicity ($p=0.002$), religion ($p=0.009$), educational level ($p=0.001$) and employment status ($p<0.001$). Attitude scores were significantly associated with ethnicity ($p<0.001$), religion ($p=0.001$) and duration of dialysis ($p=0.005$). No significant associations were observed between practice scores and socio-demographic variables.

Conclusion: Although attitudes and practices were generally favourable, knowledge gaps remain among haemodialysis patients. Targeted educational interventions are necessary to improve knowledge and enhance long-term clinical outcomes.

Keywords: *Chronic kidney disease, haemodialysis, dietary management, fluid restriction, knowledge attitude practice*

Nutritional status, dietary practices, and associated factors among the older persons in the elderly clinic at the Teaching Hospital Peradeniya

Dharmasiri VDGJM¹, Dilshan SAR¹, Karunathilake GS¹, Perera MTM¹, Deshan DGS¹, Padmini SMJ²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*janithmiuranga7@gmail.com

Introduction: Population aging is a growing public health challenge, as older adults are vulnerable to malnutrition due to physical, psychological, social, and economic factors. In Sri Lanka, the rapidly increasing elderly population and limited nutritional data emphasize the need for assessment to reduce morbidity and improve quality of life.

Objectives: To assess nutritional status, dietary practices, and associated factors among older persons attending the elderly clinic at Teaching Hospital Peradeniya.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 185 individuals aged ≥ 60 years attending the elderly clinic at Teaching Hospital Peradeniya. Participants were recruited consecutively. Data were collected using an interviewer-administered questionnaire including socio-demographic details, Mini Nutritional Assessment, Food Frequency Questionnaire, and International Physical Activity Questionnaire. Data were analyzed applying appropriate statistical tests in SPSS version 27.

Results: Among the 185 participants, 49.7% had normal nutritional status, 43.8% were at risk of malnutrition, and 6.5% were malnourished. Cereals and starchy foods were consumed more than once daily by 94.6% of participants, while 96.2% consumed pulses, fish, eggs, and lean meat at least once daily. Consumption of fruits, nuts, oilseeds, and oils was comparatively low. Associated factors for nutritional status were analyzed using one-way ANOVA test, and factors affecting dietary practices were analyzed using Fisher's Exact Test. One-way ANOVA test showed significant associations between nutritional status and higher education level ($p=0.002$), higher income ($p=0.001$), employment status ($p<0.001$), psychological problems ($p<0.001$), smoking status ($p=0.008$) and alcohol consumption ($p=0.005$). Significant associations were found between nutritional status and consumption frequency of fruits ($p<0.001$) and nuts, oil seeds, and oils ($p<0.011$). Consumption of high-sugar and high-fat foods was significantly associated with marital status ($p=0.029$), smoking habits ($p=0.006$), alcohol consumption ($p=0.016$), and physical activity level ($p=0.001$).

Conclusion: Many older adults attending the clinic were at risk of malnutrition despite the regular intake of staple foods. Nutritional status was influenced by socio-economic factors, mental health, and dietary diversity, highlighting the need for supportive interventions to promote healthy ageing.

Keywords: *Older persons, nutritional status, dietary practices, malnutrition, Sri Lanka*

Prevalence of smoking and awareness of the risk of smoking and associated factors among patients attending cardiology clinics in National Hospital Kandy and Teaching Hospital Peradeniya

Sharmika S¹, De Silva LBNPS¹, Kumarasiri PDML¹, Ahamed MNN¹, Fatima AM¹, Tennakoon TMSUB²*

¹*Faculty of medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

* ssharmika27@gmail.com

Introduction: Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) including coronary artery disease, cerebrovascular disease and heart failure, are the leading cause of death globally for which smoking is a modifiable risk factor. Continued smoking further increases morbidity and mortality among patients already diagnosed with CVD. Assessing smoking prevalence and awareness among patients attending cardiology clinics helps to improve secondary prevention and promote smoking cessation.

Objectives: To assess the prevalence of smoking and awareness of risk of smoking and associated factors among patients following cardiology clinics in National Hospital Kandy (NHK) and Teaching Hospital Peradeniya (THP).

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among the patients following cardiology clinics in NHK and THP. A total of 399 patients aged between 18-80 years were included in this study. Socio demographic information, patient's smoking habits and their awareness of the health risks associated with smoking were assessed through interviewer administered questionnaires, among selected participants.

Results: The majority of the participants were male (73.9%), aged 60–69 years (37.1%) with income below 50,000 LKR (78.7%). Overall, 11% were current, 45.4% were past, and 43.6% were never smokers. Passive smoking at home was reported by 5.5%, while 32.3% experienced workplace exposure. Risk awareness was high for commonly recognized conditions like ischemic heart disease and stroke, but low for peripheral vascular disease and aneurysms. Overall, 87.7% knew smoking causes serious illness, though awareness varied by condition. Awareness was associated with gender, education level, income, and age ($p < 0.05$). Smoking status was associated with gender, income, and age, but not with education level.

Conclusion: This study found that smoking remains prevalent among cardiac patients, particularly older males. While general awareness is high, knowledge about specific CVD risks is uneven. These highlight the need for targeted education and prevention strategies.

Keywords: *Cardiovascular diseases, smoking, secondary prevention*

Relationship between fatty liver disease and a healthy lifestyle: a hospital-based case-control study

*Jayapala KTDTH¹**, *Thennakoon MSBWTMRP¹*, *Wijesinghe WAAO¹*, *Nethmini UDK¹*, *Dharmasiri AGCK¹*, *Navaratna WMSNK²***, *Adikari SB³***

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,*

²*Department of Community Medicine*

³*Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya*

**20011019thj@gmail.com*

***Equal last authors.*

Introduction: Metabolic-dysfunction-Associated Fatty Liver Disease (MAFLD) is a progressive condition that may lead to fibrosis, steatohepatitis, cirrhosis and carcinoma. Lifestyle modifications are the first-line treatment for fatty liver disease.

Objectives: This study aims to evaluate the association between fatty liver disease and the practice of a healthy lifestyle and socioeconomic status among patients with and without fatty liver disease.

Methods: A case-control study was conducted among patients who underwent abdominal ultrasonography at the National Hospital, Kandy. Data were collected from 123 patients with and 259 controls without fatty liver disease, using a pre-tested, validated, interviewer-administered questionnaire. Variables, including age, gender, diet, physical activity, Body Mass Index (BMI), alcohol consumption, smoking, and socioeconomic factors, were initially analyzed using logistic regression and the Chi-square test. Those with a p-value < 0.25 were further analyzed using multivariable binary logistic regression.

Results: Univariable analysis showed that each additional year of age increased the crude odds of fatty liver by 2.1%. Compared to underweight individuals, those at risk of being overweight, overweight, and obese had 6.1-, 5.8-, and 21.7-fold higher crude odds, respectively. Moderate physical activity reduced crude odds by 59.5%. Alcohol, carbohydrate, and lipid intake showed non-significant upward trends. In multivariable analysis, overweight, at-risk, and obese individuals remained significant (adjusted odds ratio aOR 8.5, 8.2, and 42). Moderate and high physical activity reduced adjusted odds by 72.1% and 65.4%, respectively.

Conclusion: Maintaining a normal BMI and engaging in moderate-intensity physical activity significantly reduces the risk of fatty liver disease, independent of the age of the individual.

Keywords: *Fatty liver disease, healthy lifestyle, socioeconomic status*

The association between anthropometric parameters, physical activity level and dietary pattern in patients with acute coronary syndrome admitted to a tertiary care hospital in Sri Lanka

Abeynayaka AA¹, Reshani WGO¹, Senevirathna DIJM¹, Lakhari GDE¹*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**anjana9084@gmail.com*

Introduction: Acute coronary syndrome (ACS) remains a leading cause of mortality among adults over 35 years in Sri Lanka and is a significant global health burden. ACS includes ST-elevation myocardial infarction, non-ST-elevation myocardial infarction, and unstable angina, and results from reduced myocardial blood supply.

Objectives: To assess the association between anthropometric parameters, physical activity, and dietary patterns among patients with ACS in a tertiary care hospital in Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among patients diagnosed with ACS. The sample size was calculated using the Cochran formula, yielding 422 participants. Data were collected using a validated self-administered questionnaire to assess physical activity and dietary patterns. Anthropometric measurements including height, weight, waist circumference(WC), and hip circumference were obtained using standard procedures. Data analysis was performed using SPSS, applying descriptive statistics and chi-square tests to identify associations.

Results: The results showed a high prevalence (71.8%) of overweight and obesity among ACS patients, indicating a strong association between elevated body mass index and ACS. Central obesity was common, with increased WC and waist-to-hip ratio(WHR) observed in most patients, highlighting its role in ACS. Gender differences were noted, with females (56.8%) more likely to have higher WC, while males (60.8%) had slightly higher WHR. Although most patients reported high physical activity levels, a significant association was found between BMI and physical activity ($\chi^2 = 11.652$, $p = 0.07$). However, physical activity was not significantly associated with WC or WHR. Poor dietary habits were prevalent, with 61.09% of patients lacking a healthy diet.

Conclusion: central obesity and poor diet are key contributors to ACS among the study population.

Keywords: *Acute coronary syndrome, prevalence, risk factors, physical activity, dietary pattern, anthropometric parameters*

Knowledge, attitudes, and practices on dietary salt intake among OPD and hypertension clinic attendees of Teaching Hospital, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Hansika HDB^{1*}, Waduge WWSS¹, Lakshan GMD¹, Aththanayake AMWTB¹,
Marambe KN²

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²Department of Medical Education, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*hansikabuddhi@gmail.com

Introduction: Excessive dietary salt consumption is a major contributor to hypertension and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Sri Lanka. Despite this, public understanding and behavioural responses regarding salt intake remain insufficiently examined.

Objectives: To evaluate the knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) regarding dietary salt intake among adult attendees of the Outpatient Department (OPD) and Hypertension Clinic at Teaching Hospital Peradeniya, and to explore the influence of demographic factors and health information sources.

Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted with 403 randomly selected participants using a pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire. The study assessed demographic details, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours concerning salt intake. Data analysis was performed using Jamovi and Excel, utilizing chi-square tests to identify significant associations ($p < 0.05$).

Results: Hypertension Clinic attendees demonstrated higher satisfactory knowledge (77.7%) compared to OPD participants (59.0%). However, good dietary practices were low in both groups (60.3% and 47.6%, respectively). The estimated average per capita salt intake was 9.15 g/day, nearly double the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended limit. Gender, age, and education level were significantly associated with knowledge and practices ($p < 0.001$), whereas location (urban vs rural) showed no significant impact. Television (62%) was the primary source of health information.

Conclusion: A critical gap exists between awareness and behaviour regarding salt intake. The findings underscore the need for targeted public health interventions. Strategies should leverage television and social media to disseminate guidelines, while structured health counselling should be integrated into OPD care to improve population-level outcomes.

Keywords: Dietary salt intake, knowledge-attitude-practice (KAP), hypertension, health communication, Sri Lanka

Knowledge, attitude, and practices regarding chemotherapy among patients with cancer who are on chemotherapy attending the National Hospital Kandy

Sankeerani G¹, Abishanth L¹, Dassanayaka DKHY¹, Kumara MMPN¹, Sewwandi SJLN¹, Gunarathne R², Gunaratne ND², Rajaguru S², Kandededara SL², Ratnatunga CN³*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²National Hospital Kandy, Sri Lanka

³Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*[*sankeerani2000@gmail.com](mailto:sankeerani2000@gmail.com)*

Introduction: Chemotherapy is a key treatment modality for cancer. Patient knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding chemotherapy can significantly impact treatment adherence and outcomes.

Objectives: This study assessed the knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding chemotherapy among patients receiving chemotherapy at the National Hospital Kandy and identified associated factors.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted at the Oncology unit of the National Hospital Kandy, utilizing convenience sampling and a validated, interviewer-administered questionnaire developed from a similar study (Suhail et al., 2024) and expert input. Sociodemographic and other variables were tested for association with calculated KAP score classes, obtained by dividing total scores into three equal parts (chi-square test with statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$). The correlations between KAP scores were evaluated (Spearman correlation coefficient).

Results: A total of 385 study participants were recruited. Most participants demonstrated high knowledge scores (63.9% with scores $> 39/58$) and high attitude scores (85.2% with scores $> 10/16$), whereas practice scores were predominantly average (62.9% with scores 38-75/111). Knowledge score category was significantly associated with sex ($p < 0.001$), age ($p < 0.001$), educational level ($p < 0.001$), cancer type ($p = 0.006$), time since diagnosis ($p = 0.029$), and duration of chemotherapy ($p < 0.001$). Attitude score category was significantly associated with only age ($p = 0.005$) and educational level ($p = 0.033$). Female patients, aged 18 - 35, with higher education and > 2 years since diagnosis, had high Knowledge and Attitudes scores. Practice score category was significantly associated with age ($p = 0.026$) and caregiver presence ($p = 0.001$). There were positive correlations between knowledge vs attitude ($\rho = 0.452$, $p < 0.001$), knowledge vs practices ($\rho = 0.731$, $p < 0.001$), and attitudes vs practices ($\rho = 0.542$, $p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: High knowledge and attitude scores, but average practice scores were observed. Poor scores were noted among males, the elderly, the unemployed, and the less educated, highlighting the need for simple, gender, age, and literacy level-sensitive education.

Keywords: *Chemotherapy, patients with cancer, knowledge, attitude, practices*

Dengue-related knowledge, attitudes, and practices among polyclinic attendees in the Yatinuwara MOH area, Kandy

Sethuragavan P¹, Sivananthan Y¹, Kumarathunga CMSC¹, Dissanayake DMRK¹, Ahinsa WK¹, Navaratna WMSNK²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

[*parameswaran.sethuragavan.20@med.pdn.ac.lk](mailto:parameswaran.sethuragavan.20@med.pdn.ac.lk)

Introduction: Dengue is a mosquito-borne viral disease and a leading public health problem in Sri Lanka. Prevention is dependent on community involvement, which in turn is influenced by knowledge, attitudes, and practices.

Objectives: This study assesses the knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding dengue among polyclinic attendees in the Yatinuwara MOH area, and explores their associations with sociodemographic factors.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 439 polyclinic attendees in the Yatinuwara MOH Area using a pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire, with participants selected through a convenience sampling technique. The study included sections on socio-demographics, knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to dengue. Scores were calculated using set marking systems, and data were analyzed using Jamovi software with descriptive statistics and non-parametric tests.

Results: The study population consisted of individuals aged 18 – 75 years, with the highest proportion belonging to the 36 – 45 year age group, and a higher proportion of females (83.8%) compared to males (16.2%). Most of the participants (85.9%) had moderate knowledge, whereas 13.7% had good knowledge. There were gaps in knowledge regarding biting times and incubation period. The attitude was favourable in 70.2% of the participants. On practice, 80.0% had moderate practices, whereas 18.7% showed good practices. Knowledge differed significantly across occupations ($p = 0.046$), with farmers having the highest score, followed by businessmen, while laborers had the lowest scores. Knowledge was also significantly associated with level of education ($p = 0.009$), where participants with higher education had the highest scores and those with primary education had the lowest. A significant association was observed with ethnicity ($p < 0.001$), with Tamil participants showing the highest knowledge and Muslim participants the lowest. No significant associations were found between socio-demographic factors and attitude or practice scores.

Conclusion: In our study, while most participants in this survey had good attitudes and were aware of dengue, many lacked specific knowledge and consistent preventive behaviors. Practical, community-based interventions are required to address these gaps and strengthen dengue prevention practices in the Yatinuwara MOH area.

Keywords: *Dengue, knowledge, attitudes, practices, Sri Lanka*

Decoding predictors of pneumonia severity in hospitalized adult patients

Sukra MAF¹, Thennakoon TBSP¹, Diwyanjalee AAKT¹, Kumarathunga PPA¹, Anuradha SWLS¹, Chandrasekara CMJC², Ratnayake RMIUK³, Yasaratne BMGD³*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

³Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

**mailtoshukra01@gmail.com*

Introduction: Pneumonia remains a major cause of morbidity, and mortality worldwide, causing a heavy burden to the healthcare systems, including Sri Lanka. Reliable severity predictors are needed, yet recent local research on Sri Lankan adults is limited.

Objectives: This study aimed to identify key predictors of pneumonia severity in hospitalized adults by evaluating sociodemographic factors, comorbidities, CRB-65 scores, laboratory markers such as C-Reactive Protein (CRP) and White Blood Cell (WBC) counts, and Chest X-Ray (CXR) abnormalities scored by a five-point tool.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted at Teaching Hospital Peradeniya and the National Hospital Kandy, involving 74 adults with community-acquired pneumonia. Demographics, lifestyle factors, comorbidities, CRB-65 scores, CRP levels, WBC counts, and CXR scores were collected. Disease severity was assessed by oxygen requirement, ventilatory support, and length of stay. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and weighted regression.

Results: Initial CRP significantly predicted oxygen use (OR 1.005, $p = 0.011$) and need for ventilation (OR 1.0045, $p = 0.047$); highest CRP was also linked to oxygen use (OR 1.004, $p = 0.045$). A CRB-65 score of 2 increased oxygen requirement (OR 6.79, $p = 0.0095$). CXR abnormality, particularly multifocal or diffuse involvement, showed strong association with both oxygen need ($p = 0.00013$) and ventilation ($p = 0.0138$). Chronic Kidney Disease, heart failure, diabetes, and overall comorbidity showed positive but non-significant trends; age had a mild non-significant risk.

Conclusion: CRP, CRB-65, and CXR scoring were strong early markers of respiratory compromise. Integrating these measures in routine assessment may improve early detection of high-risk cases. Larger studies are needed for local validation.

Keywords: *Community-acquired pneumonia, severity predictors, adult patients, CRB-65, Sri Lanka.*

Knowledge and attitude regarding transmission, reactivation and age- related complications of varicella zoster virus infection among clinical and pre- clinical medical undergraduates from University of Peradeniya

Rizwan R¹, Neranjali ULNP¹, Jayasekara JTH¹, Senevirathne USU^{1*},
Rathnayake MCP¹, Noordeen F²

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.

²Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

*shwethaudayangi2001@gmail.com

Introduction: Varicella Zoster Virus (VZV) causes chickenpox (primary infection) and herpes zoster (reactivation). Although often self-limiting, it can lead to severe complications in adults, pregnant women, neonates, and immunocompromised individuals. In healthcare settings, the risk of nosocomial transmission and occupational exposure, especially among non-immune healthcare workers, highlights the need for adequate knowledge and appropriate attitudes toward prevention and management. As future healthcare providers, medical students' understanding of VZV is crucial.

Objectives: To assess knowledge and attitudes regarding VZV infection among undergraduate medical students at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 313 pre-clinical and clinical students at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya using convenience sampling. A pre-tested, self-administered English questionnaire assessed demographics, knowledge (transmission, age-related complications, and reactivation), and attitudes (Likert scale). Data were analysed using SPSS with descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, Fisher's exact tests, and Mann-Whitney U tests.

Results: Clinical students demonstrated significantly higher knowledge scores (mean = 2.94 maximum= 3.73) than pre-clinical students (mean = 2.70, maximum= 3.73). The highest scores for both groups were seen in transmission. However, the quality of performance in both groups dropped in the latter two sections. Attitude scores were also slightly higher among clinical students (mean = 3.55, maximum= 5) compared to pre-clinical students (mean = 3.36, maximum= 5), indicating a more positive outlook towards prevention and management. 'Batch' was the only factor significantly associated with both knowledge and attitude. A positive association between knowledge and attitude was observed.- (p = 0.001).

Conclusion: A knowledge and attitude gap exists among medical undergraduates regarding VZV infection. Although clinical students performed better, deficiencies remained, particularly in complications and reactivation. Early integration of VZV-related education is recommended to improve awareness, prevention, and vaccination practices.

Keywords: *Varicella zoster virus, medical undergraduates, knowledge, attitude, transmission, reactivation, complications, Sri Lanka*

Perceptions of outpatient visitors on physicians' attire and its association with trust, satisfaction, and perceived infection risk: A cross-sectional study

Abeygunasekera JS^{1}, Abeysekera AGCK¹, Kulathunga M¹, Sachini KPA¹,
Senavirathna HPDS¹, Liyanapathirana V²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*abeygunasekerajananie@gmail.com

Introduction: Patients' perceptions of physicians' attire may influence trust, satisfaction, and concerns regarding infection transmission. Understanding these perceptions is important for developing attire policies that balance professionalism with infection control.

Objectives: To assess outpatient visitors' preferences for physicians' attire, identify associated demographic factors, and evaluate perceptions regarding attire-related infection risk.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 351 outpatient visitors using a structured questionnaire. Associations between attire preferences, demographic variables, and perception outcomes were analyzed using the chi-square test and Fisher's exact test.

Results: Scrubs were the most preferred attire for both male (57.0%) and female (55.3%) physicians, while casual wear showed the highest rejection (84.3% for male and 64.7% for female physicians). Among young adults aged 18–39 years, 63.0% preferred scrubs for female physicians compared with 34.1% of older adults aged 60 years or above, whereas sarees were preferred by 54.5% of older adults compared with 18.2% of young adults ($p < 0.001$). Overall, 54.1% believed attire contributed to trust building and 40.2% reported an influence on satisfaction. A white coat worn over regular attire was preferred by 50.4% of participants. Regarding infection perception, 80.6% recognized that microorganisms can survive on clothing, 54.7% considered physicians' attire a potential infection source, and 85.4% believed short-sleeved attire promotes better hand hygiene.

Conclusion: Younger adults demonstrated a preference for scrubs, whereas older adults favored sarees for female physicians, indicating generational variation in perceptions of professionalism. Although awareness of attire-related infection risk was high, opinions differed regarding specific attire components such as white coats and sleeve length. Attire policies should therefore balance professional appearance, patient confidence, and infection prevention.

Keywords: *Physician attire, patient perception, trust, satisfaction, infection risk, outpatient*

Perceptions of doctors and the general public on features of an effective therapeutic (doctor-patient) relationship

Bandaranayake RMDS¹, Dilpana HAB¹, Karunananda PHSR¹, Perera KNS¹,
Dayaratna PGKN¹, Edussuriya DH²*

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.*

²*Department of Forensic Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.*

**dilinisbandaranayake@gmail.com*

Introduction: An effective doctor-patient relationship is crucial for positive health outcomes. In order for such a relationship to be effective it is important for there to be alignment between patient's priorities and doctors' perceptions of patient priorities. Given the paucity of data in this area, it is envisaged that this study would provide insights for practitioners and also inform educators in training doctors.

Objectives: To compare priorities of doctors and the general public regarding features of an effective therapeutic relationship.

Methods: Features of an effective therapeutic relationship were identified from the literature. A questionnaire incorporating these features was developed with a ranking scale. This was pre-tested and administered subsequently to 130 doctors and 150 members of the general public. They were requested to rank identified features based on their perception of importance in maintaining an effective therapeutic relationship. Data were analyzed through SPSS statistical software and Mann -Whitney U test.

Results: Doctors opined that professional attributes such as 'Maintaining confidentiality/privacy', 'Professional behavior', and 'Doing no harm to patient and society' as important. In contrast, the general public considered more personal attributes such as 'Commitment', 'Ability to understand a patient's situation', and 'Being fair' to be more important. However, both doctors and the general public equally considered 'Acting in the best interest of the patient', 'Good communication skills', 'Respecting patient's decisions', and 'Obtaining patient's consent' as important.

Conclusion: While doctors emphasized the importance of medical ethics and professionalism, patients placed greater emphasis on personal attributes, with both groups recognizing the importance of shared decision-making.

Keywords: *Doctor-patient relationship, therapeutic relationship, perceptions*

Assessing knowledge, attitudes, and barriers to procedural pain management among pediatric healthcare workers in tertiary hospitals in Kandy

Ekanyake EMNL^{1*}, Amarasinghe GHL¹, Dilshani LPT¹, Kodithuwakku KACN¹, Perera TDI¹, Senevirathne HMTW²

¹*Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*numayaekanyake@gmail.com

Introduction: Pain management, although essential in pediatric needle procedures, remains underutilized in Sri Lankan hospitals, despite healthcare workers having good knowledge.

Objectives: To assess knowledge, attitudes, and barriers to the use of procedural pain management methods among pediatric healthcare workers in tertiary hospitals in the Kandy district.

Methods: Descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among consecutively-sampled pediatric healthcare workers of National Hospital Kandy, Teaching Hospital Peradeniya, and Sirimavo Bandaranaike Specialized Children's Hospital, from 03.12.2024 to 28.02.2025. Data were collected using a pre-validated, interview-administered questionnaire, assessing knowledge, attitudes, and barriers on use of EMLA cream, oral sucrose solution (OSS), skin-to-skin contact, breastfeeding, distraction with toys, videogames, cartoons, talking, during needle procedures of venipuncture, intravenous cannulation, and vaccination. Attitudes on establishment of procedural rooms were also assessed. Data were analyzed using SPSS 27.0.

Results: Among 205 participants interviewed, (80% nurses and remainder doctors); 65.9% had >5 years of experience. Knowledge was adequate for most methods (talking 99.0%, toys 94.6%, EMLA 86.3%), except OSS (40.0%). Nurses were more knowledgeable in using breastfeeding. ($p=0.007$). Majority were willing to use these methods (talking 96.6%, toys 92.6%, breastfeeding 84.9%), except videogames (43.9%). Further training was appreciated for skin-to-skin contact (43.9%), EMLA (38.1%), and OSS (34.6%). Major barriers to use were lack of resources, parental support, time, and training. Majority supported establishment of a separate procedural room in their wards (90.7%), with institutional support (96.6%).

Conclusion: Although pediatric healthcare workers demonstrate adequate knowledge and willingness to use procedural pain management strategies, implementation is limited by resource constraints, time pressures, and training gaps. Institutional support for establishing dedicated procedural rooms presents a feasible opportunity to improve practice.

Keywords: *Pediatric pain management, procedural pain, needle procedures, barriers, healthcare workers*

Prevalence and associated factors of Computer Vision Syndrome among adolescents in the Gangawatakorale Education Division

Fernando KPA^{1}, Chathurani I¹, Madanayaka IK¹, Niwarthana HBR¹,
Wanninayake WMS L¹, Navarathna WMSNK²*

¹Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

²Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

**prashanianjali@gmail.com*

Introduction: Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS) is the complex of eye and vision problems related to near work, which are experienced during or related to computer use. It is a growing concern among adolescents due to increased screen time. In Sri Lanka, research on CVS, particularly among adolescents, remains limited.

Objectives: The objectives of this study were to assess the prevalence and associated factors of CVS among adolescents in the Gangawatakorale education division.

Method: A descriptive, cross-sectional study with an analytical component was conducted among adolescents in the Gangawatakorale education division to assess the prevalence of CVS. A two-stage cluster sampling method was used, and the sample size was determined using the Cochran formula, allowing a 10% non-response rate, resulting in 422 participants from grades 6 to 12 across three schools. Data collection involved a self-administered questionnaire adapted from validated sources to assess CVS symptoms and associated factors. Additionally, visual acuity was measured using the Snellen chart. Data analysis was done using SPSS statistical software package, using descriptive statistics and the Chi-square test to find any associated factors.

Results: Among 394 students, CVS was prevalent among 20.2%. The commonest symptoms were headache and tearing. Occurrence of CVS was significantly associated with taking less breaks ($\chi^2 = 0.588$, $p=0.021$), and increased screen time ($\chi^2 = -3.664$, $p=0.000$), but no other significant associations were found. Eye pain ($\chi^2 = 4.724$, $p = 0.030$), burning sensation ($\chi^2= 9.774$, $p= 0.002$), and coloured halos around objects ($\chi^2 =6.576$, $p=0.010$) had a significant association with the female gender. No association with visual acuity was observed. The students' knowledge of protective measures, like the 20-20-20 rule, was poor.

Conclusions: The study found that 20.2% of adolescents in the sample were affected by CVS. This highlights the need for greater efforts to educate students on the issue.

Keywords: *Computer vision syndrome, digital eye strain, prevalence, risk factors, children, vision problems, Sri Lanka*



PeMURS

Peradeniya Medical Undergraduate Research Symposium

PeMURS '26

PERADENIYA MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY MEDICINE
FACULTY OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA

ISBN 978-624-5709-68-7



9 786245 709687