

P3: Awareness, attitudes and practices on cervical cancer and screening among married women in Udagangoda Grama Niladhari Division, Rathnapura District, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Cervical cancer is a major public health problem throughout the world.

Objectives: To explore the awareness attitudes and practices among married women in age at or above 35 years.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional interviewer administered questionnaire survey was conducted among 170 women in Udagangoda Grama Niladhari Division, Rathnapura District in Sri Lanka.

Results: Mean age was 52.6, 54.7% (n=93) were passed O/L and 60% (n=160) were unemployed women. Almost 87.6% (n=149) had heard of cervical cancer (CC) and 87.1% (n=148) had heard cervical cancer screening (CCS). A small proportion of participants had heard of risk factors, signs and symptoms and link between HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) and CC, that is 2.3% (n=4), 11.2% (n=19) and 2.9% (n=5) respectively. Electronic Medias and midwives play great role in providing information on CC and CCS. Even though majority of them heard the disease and screening method; screening uptake was very low among the participants 19.4% (n=33).

This findings highlighted busy schedule in life 43.5% (n=74) and lack of knowledge 30.6% (n=52) were common barriers toward uptake of screening services. Age and educational level played key roles in determining the awareness and attitude of the women. Similarly proper awareness and positive attitudes were affected to determine the screening behavior of the respondents.

Conclusion: Proper awareness programmes and attitude changing are required to overcome low attendance for screening services in Sri Lanka.