

KNOWLEDGE ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE ON PREVENTION OF SURGICAL SITE
INFECTIONS AMONG NURSES WORKING IN THE SURGICAL UNITS OF DEFENSE
FORCES MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.

BY:

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ABSTRACT

Surgical site infections (SSIs) are among the most common hospital acquire infections that is an unwanted situation. It is a burden on the patient and the social health system at large. Despite the advances medicine and surgery and in wound management, wound infections have been regarded as the most common nosocomial infections especially in patients undergoing surgery. Resulting prolonged hospital stay, increased trauma care, treatment costs and general wound management practice which has become more demanding. Many contributing factors explain the increase rate and incidence of SSIs, however, It is well recognized that the risk of transmission of pathogens when providing medical care services can be kept low through appropriate and standardized prevention procedures.

DFMH has large volume of surgical patients especially casualties of war. However, from surgical patients register; DFMH/002/2015, out of the 210 surgeries that had been done between the months of January and March, five developed SSIs prolonging patients stay. Nurses have a great role to play in the prevention of SSIs and thus there is need to assess their Knowledge, Attitude and Practice in prevention of SSIs. No such study however, has been conducted in DFMH.

The aim of this study therefore, was to assess the level of knowledge, attitude and practice of nurses on prevention of surgical site infections at Defense Forces Memorial hospital, Nairobi.

A descriptive, cross sectional study was carried out between the months of June and September 2015 at surgical units of Defense forces Memorial hospital. A sample of 90 Nurses was selected by simple random sampling method and semi-structured; self- administered questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents.

Data collection and coding was done then entered into electronic spreadsheet in Excel computer program and validated by double entry. The data was then imported and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software and the results displayed in the form of tables and charts.

Majority of the respondents, 79(87.8%), had knowledge regarding SSIs and were able to list the various clinical features, while 11(12.2%) could not differentiate signs of surgical site infections from those of normal inflammatory process. 55(61.1%), strongly agreed that hand washing

reduced the risk of SSIs, however, 40 (44.4%) of the respondent did practice hand washing always before and after wound dressing. Majority of the respondents, 43 (47.8%), said that they washed hands often while 7 (7.8%) respondents seldom washed hands. A vast majority of the respondents indicated that they followed recommended guidelines during patient care activities. Specifically, majority 44 (48.9%), indicated that they followed guidelines for aseptic technique during wound dressing. 35 (38.9%), stated that they were fully aware of hand washing guidelines displayed at all hand washing points. Only 11 (12.2%) stated that they had not given any attention to the provided guidelines. Many respondents, 66 (73.3%), were of the opinion that SSIs pose serious patient outcomes and that health care workers could spread SSIs {42 (46.7%)}. Few respondents, 10 (11.1%), however, expressed the attitude that it is unrealistic to expect health care workers to comply with the recommended guidelines for patients care especially during episodes of increased workload. Other factors cited that hindered the ideal practice of prevention of SSIs includes , Inadequate training on SSIs prevention, lack of adequate equipment and supplies, equipment breakdown and staff shortage thus huge workload for nurses

The conclusion of the study was that there is need for the hospital management to develop policies and guidelines regarding SSIs prevention and conduct regular supervision to ensure compliance. It also concluded that the hospital administration should provide continuous medical education on SSI prevention, provide adequate supplies such as surgical gloves and dressing materials and equipment and also improve nurses to patient ratio.