

## **Knowledge of the Disease and Practices Related to Use of Inhalers in Elderly Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Patients Attending Chest Clinics**

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Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a leading cause of death in the world, commonly seen among elderly. It is preventable and treatable. Malpractices and lack of knowledge related to the disease is one of the main reasons to increase hospital admissions and deaths among them. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted to explore the knowledge of the disease and practices related to the use of inhalers among elderly at the chest clinics. A scoring system through a pre tested validated questionnaire was used to assess the knowledge about the disease and the practices related to the use of inhalers. This was conducted in the National Hospital for Respiratory Diseases, Welisara and District General Hospital, Matale in August 2020. A total of 148 previously diagnosed patients with COPD, age of 65 years and above were studied. Of the participants, 85 (57.4%) were males and 114 (77.1%) were within the range of 65 to 75 years, 30 (20.2%) were 76 to 85 years and four (2.7%) were above 86 years. Among them smokers in anytime of their lifetime and non-smokers were 66 (44.65%) and 82 (55.4%) respectively. The lack of knowledge about the disease showed a significant association with the number of hospital readmissions for the past three months ( $p=0.05$ ). However, the association between practices related to use of inhalers and the number of hospital readmissions was not significant ( $p> 0.05$ ). The numbers of hospital readmissions within the past three months were less in patients with good knowledge regarding the disease. There was no significant relation with regard to the practices related to the use of inhalers in elderly COPD patients attending chest clinics.

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