

Attitude of Public Health Midwives Towards Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV in Kandy Regional Director of Health Services Area

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Transmission of HIV from mother to child (MTCT) is a major public health and social concern that the world must face today. MTCT can occur during pregnancy, delivery and through breast milk (AIDS.gov, 2015). Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS (PMTCT) through integrated Maternal and Child Health service is an identified component of the reproductive health (WHO PMTCT guidelines, 2015). As Public Health Midwives (PHMM) are the community level key service providers in reproductive health services in Sri Lanka, well-trained PHMM with positive attitudes are prerequisites to implement the national strategy of HIV prevention (Beneragama, 1991). The objective of this study was to describe the attitude of public health midwives towards the PMTCT of HIV in Kandy Regional Director of Health Services (RDHS) area. A cross sectional descriptive study was carried out to assess the attitudes of PHMs towards PMTCT of HIV in Kandy RDHS area. A self – administered, semi structured and pre tested questionnaire was used to collect data. Information was obtained on demographic factors and attitudes of PHMM towards PMTCT of HIV. There were 6 questions to assess the attitude and cut off was taken as 3. The total PHM population of Kandy RDHS area (n= 423) was studied and the response rate was 79.2% (n=335). About 90% of PHMs were married and mean age was 41.8 years (SD=3years). 64.2% of midwives had qualification of G. C.E. (A/ L). Most of the PHMs (55.8%) had service experience of more than 20 years. 76.1% of PHMM had positive attitudes towards PMTCT service while 41.3% thought that PMTCT program will increase their work load. 74.9% of PHMs were willing to assist in delivery of HIV positive mothers. There were no significant associations between socio-demographic factors and attitudes of PHMM toward PMTCT of HIV. Although overall attitudes of the PHMM towards PMTCT was good in Kandy RDHS area continuous professional development and further attitude development is needed for better outcomes.

Key Words: PMTCT, PHM, Attitudes, HIV