

3rd International Meeting on
NURSING RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE
&
International Conference On
DIGESTIVE DISEASE

November 28-29, 2018 | Madrid, Spain

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The perceived level of knowledge of cervical cancer among female medical and nursing students in Bahrain

Cervical cancer is a leading cause of female mortality worldwide. Screening programs are invaluable in achieving: prevention, diagnosis and early intervention. The Papanicolaou (Pap) smear test is one of the most prominent of these programs and has been proven to be highly effective. Female healthcare professionals need to be knowledgeable about the Human papillomavirus (HPV). This need is born out of their own needs, primarily as women and members of the public. Moreover, knowledge should also improve their effectiveness as professionals. This cross-sectional study assessed knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to the cervical cancer among students in Bahrain using a self-administered questionnaire. 192 females medical (n=44) and nursing (n=148) students were surveyed in 2016. Only one third of participants (65/192)

correctly identified that a virus, spread sexually, was a major cause of cervical cancer. There was a significant difference in the proportion of medical and nursing students that answered this question correctly; medical 37 (84.1%) and nursing 28 (18.9%). The odds ratio for nursing students answering this question incorrectly was 4.4 (CI 95% 3.1 - 6.4). This study also suggests that future female healthcare workers maybe expected to be well informed on this topic in both their professional and personal capacity, but less than 1 in 5 of nursing students were aware of HPV in relation to cervical cancer. This indicates that there is a need to increase public awareness of HPV and risk factors for its spread in Bahrain.

Biography

Hana Kadhom has 35 Years' experience in nursing as a practitioner and educator. Her experience spans across the Middle East and UK. She obtained her PhD in 1989 from Hull University (UK) and she has postgraduate diploma from British Universities (in nursing education and health and safety), she has supervised many postgraduate theses and is a former senior lecturer and Director of the Nursing Degree Bridging program at the Royal College of Surgeons Medical University in Ireland-Bahrain & Saudi Aramco.

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