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Conference Abstract

Role of primary care providers in dengue prevention and control in the community: practitioners' and local laypersons' perspectives in Dhaka, Bangladesh

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Abstract

Purpose: To examine the role of primary care providers in controlling and preventing DF and DHF in urban communities of Bangladesh.

Context: Dengue fever (DF) and dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF) are major public health threats in Bangladesh, particularly in large urban areas as they appeared to affect significant number of population in every two to three years cycle. Since about one third of the population of the City of Dhaka live below the poverty line, most of them seek treatment at the primary health care (PHC) clinics and are not admitted in hospitals.

State of the art: During the field investigation, it was found that PHC practitioners in Dhaka do not rank dengue as an important emerging arboviral disease and suggest patients to take appropriate control measures or seeking hospital admission. It was also found that PHC facilities vary in different socioeconomic status areas in Dhaka city and local layperson's knowledge, attitudes, and practice are also vary with the information dissemination by the PHC practitioners.

Statement for debate: In this study, we assert that primary care practitioners, as the first point of patient contacts, can play a critical role in advising patients suspected of having dengue to take early preventive measures to intervene into the chain of dengue transmission. Effective communications with patients by primary care providers can not only help mobilising the larger community for undertaking immediate preventing measures, they can also result in collective perception and behaviour change in the long run. Our study results concluded that appropriate policy formulation and implementation are necessary to involve primary care providers in the control and prevention of dengue in the urban communities.

Keywords:

dengue fever, dengue haemorrhagic fever, primary care, preventive measures, perception, behaviour change, policy formulation

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