

## **Knowledge and Attitudes Regarding Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Their Associated Factors among Adult Patients Attending Outpatient Department in Colombo South Teaching Hospital**

MUW Gunaratne<sup>1</sup>, DAYV Gunawardhane<sup>1</sup>, SM Jeewarathne<sup>1</sup>, YW Kodikara<sup>1</sup>, HS Munasinghe<sup>1</sup>, B Fernandopulle<sup>2</sup> and CSE Goonewardena<sup>3#</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda*

<sup>3</sup>*Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda*

#sampatha@sjp.ac.lk

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) causing Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a well-known public health concern in the world. Assessing knowledge and attitudes towards the disease is essential in the general population. Objective was to determine the knowledge and attitudes regarding Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and their associated factors in adult patients. A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out in 2019 in the Out Patient Department of Colombo South Teaching Hospital. Total of 402 adults aged 18-45 years were selected through systematic sampling. Structured pre tested interviewer administered questionnaire was used for data collection. Chi squared test was used to determine the significance of categorical data. Significance was taken as  $p < 0.05$ . Mean knowledge of the population was 13.52 (SD±4.752). Participants less than 30 years, unmarried and higher educational level had better knowledge and was statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Majority had positive attitudes regarding HIV/AIDS. However, negative attitudes in 31-45 years age group are notably higher than the 18-30 year group ( $p < 0.05$ ). Those married and less educated people had more negative attitudes ( $p < 0.05$ ). The most frequent sources of information were the television, internet and newspapers. The knowledge provided by the medical professionals was notably low. Overall knowledge regarding prevention, modes of transmission, related myths and the availability of health services was good. Health care professionals need to play a more important role in diffusing knowledge to the patients.

**Keywords:** *HIV/AIDS, knowledge, attitudes, general population.*