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INJURY PATTERN AMONG PATIENTS WITH SELF-INFLICTED CUT INJURIES PRESENTING TO THE ACCIDENT SERVICE UNIT OF NATIONAL HOSPITAL, SRI LANKA

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Introduction and Objectives: Self-inflicted cut injuries are a common presentation to accident service units (ASU) and a significant burden to the health care sector. Hence, we describe the injury patterns among victims of self-inflicted cut injuries presenting to the ASU.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among a consecutive sample of 137 victims of self-inflicted cut injuries admitted to ASU at National hospital during 3 months period. Data was collected using an interviewer administered questionnaire and referring to documented evidence in the bed-head tickets (BHTs). Quantitative data were described using mean values and qualitative data were presented using percentages.

Results: Majority of the victims were male (75.2%) with a mean age of 27 years (SD=14.16). Majority (64.2%) had studied up to G.C.E Ordinary level, however 45.3% belongs to laborer/non-skilled occupation category. Majority had inflicted self-cut using broken glass (75.2%) at their own home (67.9%). Upper limb was the commonest site (75.2%) with majority involving muscle cut (81%) which need surgical repair, yet most (71.5%) did not have any functional deficit following injury. At the time of injury, 40.1% were under the influence of alcohol. Majority had inflicted self-cut due to anger (59.9%) followed by arguments with family (27.7%). Only 5% gave a history of mental illness. Among the victims, 32% had previous attempts, nevertheless over 95% had not received assistance following their first episode.

Conclusion: Majority of the self-inflicted injuries are due to poor coping skills. Mental health assessment with anger management in every victim with self-inflicted injury is recommended.

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PERCEIVED CHALLENGES TO WIVES OF DISABLED MILITARY VETERANS OF SRI LANKA; A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Introduction & Objectives: The civil war lasting for nearly three decades accounted for a significant population of disabled military veterans in Sri Lanka. This study explores the social and family challenges perceived by the wives of disabled military veterans.

Methods: We conducted a qualitative study using in-depth interviews (thirteen) on wives of disabled soldiers in three divisional secretariat areas in Anuradhapura district. Following data transcription, inductive thematic analysis was performed.

Results: Analysis of data revealed eight different themes; financial constraints were present due to high expenses on children's education and husbands' disability leading to debit. Marriage and sexual problems rose due to reduction of husbands' inclination on sexual life, neurological problems, conflicts and memory impairments of husbands. Children had negative influence on education and less exposure to opportunities due to fathers' injury. Social participation was limited. The mental health impact was high due to less social networks, anxiety and fear on stability of the family, and lack of time to engage in religious activities. Some families developed coping through social relationships, care giving on children and