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Knowledge regarding pre-hospital care after a road traffic injury and associated factors among three wheel drivers in selected police areas in Colombo District, Sri Lanka

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Background: Globally, the number of deaths related to road traffic accidents remains unacceptably high. However, effective prehospital services can minimize many crash consequences. Usually, pre-hospital care is delivered by a lay first responder, more likely another driver.

Objective: To describe the knowledge regarding pre-hospital care after a road traffic injury and associated factors among three wheel drivers in selected police areas in Colombo District, Sri Lanka.

Method: A community-based descriptive-cross sectional study was carried out in selected police areas in the Colombo District. A total of 384 three wheel drivers registered in selected police areas were recruited using simple random sampling. A structured pre-tested interviewer administered questionnaire was used for data collection. Depending on the mean knowledge score (28.02 ± 8.4), above mean was considered as “Good” knowledge while below mean was considered as “Poor” knowledge. SPSS version 25.0 was used for data analysis and $p < 0.05$ was taken as statistically significant. Ethical approval was obtained from Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

Results: The mean age of drivers was 40.9 ± 11.0 years. Only 31.5% ($n=121$) of the drivers had first aid training. The majority ($n=248$, 64.6%) had a good knowledge to identify signs of air way problems. Only one third of the respondents 149 (38.8%) knew that cardio-pulmonary resuscitation should be given when the patient is unconscious and not breathing. Less than 50% of the subjects had good knowledge regarding management of a patient with bleeding and how to transport a patient to a hospital. Overall, the majority ($n=203$, 52.9%) had a good overall knowledge. Older age and having a first aid training were significantly associated with good knowledge ($p=0.004$).

Conclusion: Knowledge regarding pre-hospital care among three wheel drivers was adequate. First aid training was significantly associated with knowledge. Compulsory first aid training before issuing driving license is recommended.