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Road traffic injury could be minimized when individual road users take more responsibility for their safety and the safety of others”: Perception of Healthcare Workers in Vanuatu

Saen Fanaï¹, Masoud Mohammad Nezhad²

¹Ministry of Health, Port Vila, Vanuatu. ²Fiji National University, Suva, Fiji

Abstract

Background: Around 1.35 million deaths are caused by Road Traffic Injuries (RTIs) each year. This study aimed to explore the perceptions of Vanuatu's Health Care Workers (HCWs) regarding the existing preventative strategies for RTI.

Methods: This study employed qualitative methods that used Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to gather data from HCWs in 2020. Self-identified Ni-Vanuatu HCWs who have been serving for over 6 months and residing at the study setting were included in this study. Purposive sampling was used to recruit study participants from three main hospitals in Vanuatu. A semi-structured open-ended questionnaire was designed to guide the FGDs. Data obtained were sorted out using thematic analysis processed with some preconceived themes based on theory, and also allowing the data to determine new themes.

Results: Data saturation was reached from conducting 5 FGDs with 22 HCWs who were emergency nurses and doctors as well as public health officers. Five main themes and sixteen subthemes were generated from the study. The main themes include the significance and trends of RTI, barriers to effective care, pre-hospital management capacity, barriers to pre-hospital care and addressing RTI. The findings suggest that addressing health institutional leadership and resources will improve prevention of RTIs.

Discussion: Prevention of RTIs is hindered by the lack of health institutional capacities in terms of leadership and, resources that include emergency equipment, financial and trained human resources. The health sector should consider developing stronger leadership in road safety to be an essential part of its core business.