

Pattern of first aid practices for common health issues among government schoolteachers in the Nallur Educational Division

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Background and objective: Receiving first aid prior to professional medical help could preserve life, prevent worsening of the condition and/or promote recovery. This study aims to describe the pattern of first aid practices for common health issues and the influence of sociodemographic factors on these practices among government schoolteachers in the Nallur Education Division.

Methods: This is a descriptive cross-sectional study among 428 government schoolteachers in the Nallur Education Division. Stratified random sampling was applied to select the sample. Data collection was done by using a self-administered questionnaire and analyzed by SPSS version 21. Chi-square test was used to determine the presence of an association.

Results: A total of 408 teachers participated with a response rate of 95.3%. Among them, 77.9% were female, 57.6% were degree holders, and 20.1% had received first aid training within five years. Within the latter group, 69.5% had received practical training. A majority of teachers (63.5%) had dealt with at least one injury during the last year. Common illnesses that needed first aid were headache (39.7%) and laceration (31.9%). With respect to first aid measures taken for cases of headache, 76.5% gave paracetamol, 66.7% kept the student in rest, and 99.4% practiced correct methods. Among laceration respondents, 78.5% controlled bleeding, 47.7% elevated the injured part, and 99.2% practiced correct methods. Practices of first aid had a significant association with educational level ($p=0.024$) and previous first aid training ($p<0.001$).

Conclusion: Practices of first aid are influenced by educational level and previous first aid training, indicating that it may be beneficial to give periodic first aid training to government schoolteachers and appoint more degree holders to teaching positions.

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