

The prevalence of *Acinetobacter baumannii* in the tertiary care set up and the rising indifference to the pathogen as a healthcare-associated infection among the healthcare personnel

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Background and Purpose: *Acinetobacter baumannii*, known healthcare-associated pathogen is known to cause various healthcare-associated infections worldwide and in Saudi Arabia. It is often isolated from patients in the burn wards and the intensive care units. The main aim of this study is to report the prevalence of *A.baumannii* and to assess the knowledge of the healthcare- personnel on this long forgotten and neglected pathogen using the qualitative method.

Methods: A total of 150 samples from different wards of a tertiary care hospital was collected over three months (Jan- March 2018). Identification was by VITEK 2 (biomerieux) and antibiotic sensitivity was done. The qualitative data from twenty healthcare-personnel was collected via interviews which were audio recorded and transcribed. The qualitative data was analyzed by thematic analysis.

Results: The prevalence of *A. baumannii* was found to be 30%. The mean age and S.D was 51.6+/- 27.3. The organism was commonly isolated from ICU patients(60%)(Chi-square statistic is 24.5537, p-value 0.000001, $p < 0.05$). *Acinetobacter* infection was commonly associated with Pneumonia (33.3%) (Chi-square 12.8571, p-value 0.000336, $p < 0.05$ statistically significant) and RTA (24.4%) (Chi-square 6.8681, p-value 0.008775, $p < 0.05$ statistically significant). It had a high resistance pattern to most of the antibiotics like Ciprofloxacin 86.7%, Pipro-Tazobactam 82.2%, and Imipenem 73.3%. *A.baumannii* was commonly isolated from the ETT samples (17.8%), and sputum(20%), wound (13.3%), tracheal secretions (13.4%) and blood (6.7%). Three themes emerged using thematic analysis of the qualitative data 1. Indifference to *A.baumannii* as a pathogen 2. Implementation of Antibiotic stewardship program 3. Adequate training of the ICU healthcare personnel on *A.baumannii* as a nosocomial pathogen.

Conclusion: *Acinetobacter baumannii* is still a threat which most of the healthcare personnel tend to ignore. Rigorous infection control measures are needed along with education of the ICU healthcare personnel to put a check on this often neglected pathogen.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jiph.2018.10.086>



An interview-based qualitative study on a healthcare workers' perspectives of health-care-associated infections and infection control measures in a tertiary care hospital in Abha, Saudi Arabia

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Background and Purpose: Healthcare-associated infections (HAI) are preventable infections contained through stringent infection control measures. Little is known about the knowledge and opinions of the healthcare workers on HAI and infection control measures practiced in Saudi Arabia. The purpose of our qualitative study was to explore the perspectives of healthcare workers on HAI infections and infection control measures in a tertiary Hospital in Abha, Saudi Arabia.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews based on an interview guide was used to collect the qualitative data from twenty-five healthcare workers consisting of doctors and nurses. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim immediately. Data were analyzed using the thematic analysis method and themes were identified, reviewed and discussed by the authors.

Results: From the interviews of twenty-five personnel of varying professions, designations and nationalities four themes were identified. These were 1. Knowledge of HAI and infection control 2. Infection control measures in practice 3. The gap in infection control measures and HAI 4. Required implementations. We found that all the nurses strictly followed hand hygiene and sharps disposal measures. Knowledge of HAI, types, knowledge, and practice of disinfection measures was inadequate among the junior residents. Knowledge and practice of the process of waste management were sparse among most of the healthcare personnel.

Conclusion: Early introduction of training programs along with lectures in the educational system will help the medical and nursing students to be informed in HAI and infection control measures. Intensive hands-on training programs on infection control measures for the junior medical residents at the start of their residency program will be beneficial in curbing the spread of HAI and active practice of infection control. Educational policies and training programs for all the healthcare personnel including the paramedical staff and promotion of the active practice of prevention strategies will help to combat HAI effectively.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jiph.2018.10.087>

