



The Galle Medical Journal

Journal of the Galle Medical Association

Volume 28 Number 3 September 2023

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Editorial

Anaphylaxis management; need for a broader approach

Anaphylaxis is a clinical emergency that endangers life. Its early diagnosis is essential with a clear understanding of its nuanced presentations and severity levels to achieve satisfactory outcomes. Healthcare workers at relevant levels need to have the knowledge to recognize and manage this life-threatening condition.

In this issue of *Galle Medical Journal*, Dharmaratne and Dahanayake have focused on knowledge related to identification and management of anaphylaxis. They have surveyed non-specialist doctors in a teaching hospital regarding the knowledge on anaphylaxis and its associated factors and self-perceived confidence on its management. The study highlights the aspects that are satisfactory and sub-optimal.

Revelations made by Dharmaratne and Dahanayake in their study, calls for focused action in anaphylaxis management including follow up and trigger / amplifying factors. Anaphylaxis can occur anywhere – home, while travelling or in a hospital.

The paper calls for training and educational programmes for doctors to improve their knowledge on the diagnosis, management, and follow-up of anaphylaxis. The study deals with knowledge of hospital doctors only. There is a need to educate other health care workers both in hospitals and community settings - going beyond doctors.

In severe life-threatening cases, action need to begin well before the patient is brought to hospital. This calls for a focus on the **pre-hospital phase** as well - the education of public and ambulance staff on the condition, trigger factors and the use of adrenaline auto-injectors (AAI) by the vulnerable. It will be highly relevant with an efficient *Suwa Seriya* ambulance service operating island wide.

From a logistical perspective, the free availability of AAI for vulnerable subjects and ambulance staff will be of immense value in saving lives. From a policy perspective there is a need for the broader development of a clinical specialty on allergy and immunology with an island wide presence.

The requirements for optimal management of anaphylaxis with excellent outcomes transcends the mere bounds of hospital doctors - the community, pre-hospital phase healthcare workers, health care administrators and policy makers and innovations in postgraduate education focusing on clinical immunology.

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