

## **Knowledge, attitudes and practices on Basic Life Support (BLS) among traffic police officers, Police Division-Nugegoda, Sri Lanka**

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**Introduction:** Basic Life Support (BLS) is the only known effective method to keep a cardiac arrested person alive until he or she receives advanced medical management. Traffic police officers can be the first responders who encounter cardiac arrests and traumatic emergencies during their duty hours. Hence, the knowledge, attitudes and practices on BLS among Sri Lankan traffic police officers in Police Division - Nugegoda were assessed in this study.

**Methodology:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 271 traffic police officers of police division-Nugegoda, Sri Lanka. A pre-tested interviewer- based questionnaire which was based on European Resuscitation Council guidelines-2015 was used for data collection. Questionnaire was consisted of 25 close ended questions and the knowledge, attitudes and practices on BLS were categorized in to good, satisfactory, poor and very poor using a scoring system.

**Results:** From the 271 participants, only 253 (93.4%) were consented to participate in the study. Though, the attitudes regarding BLS

were good among the participants, the knowledge and practical knowledge was poor. The mean score for knowledge, attitudes and practices were  $37.7 \pm 18.3$ ,  $82.7 \pm 17.4$  and  $40.4 \pm 16.9$  respectively. Receiving or not receiving in-service training programmes showed a significant association with knowledge ( $P= 0.004$ ) and with practices ( $P= 0.001$ ) on BLS.

**Discussion:** Though, 80.2% of the police officers have seen BLS being done, only 19% had hands on practice on a person. This shows the need of conducting continuous BLS training programmes with hands on practice. A comparative study conducted in India on trained and untrained medical students proved the effectiveness of training programmes of BLS programmes.

**Conclusion:** The overall knowledge, attitudes and practices on BLS were not satisfactory among the traffic police officers of police division-Nugegoda, Sri Lanka. Implementing frequent training programmes on BLS would enhance knowledge, attitudes and practices and it would save many lives.

**Key words:** Basic Life Support, traffic police officers