

Health Care Waste Management in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria: Impact on Citizens Health

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BACKGROUND

Health care waste has created great concern for the reason that it is a danger to the environment, the health of patients, medical personnel and the general public. The study examined health care waste management in hospitals in Obio/Akpor Government Area of Rivers state with the aim of evaluating the effectiveness of Health care waste management systems.

METHODS

The study was a prospective cross sectional study carried out in seventeen (17) wards of the Local Government Area. One hospital was randomly selected from each ward of the local government area. Descriptive analysis such as frequency, percentage and the statistical tools of Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to test the hypotheses. The study measures were the different types of Health care waste generated; the disposal methods employed by hospitals in the study area; the effectiveness of Health care waste management systems that were in place and the quantity of Hospital waste generated in the areas studied.

RESULT

The generation rate of health care waste is influenced by the number of patients, the type of service rendered and size of hospital. Government hospitals generated more waste (683kg/day with an average of 356patients/day) than the private hospitals.(15kg/day with an average of 8 patients/day). There were no effective waste management systems in place. The study showed that there were differences in the presence of waste management plans and policies. Waste disposal by incineration and burning was common among the hospitals.

CONCLUSION

The waste management practice in hospitals in ObioAkpor LGA is poor. The study recommends that a good waste management plan should be put in place in the hospitals, the standard practice of waste segregation at source of generation should be enforced through adequate supervision by the relevant Health regulatory Authorities, and infectious waste should be treated as recommended by WHO before disposal.

KEYWORDS

Health Care; Waste Management; Health Impact; Nigeria.

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