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**Assessment of knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding Lassa fever among healthcare workers in a tertiary hospital, Enugu, South-East, Nigeria: Implications for control****Omotowo I Babatunde, Eyisi I G, Obi I E and Agwu-Umahi R O**  
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**Introduction:** Lassa fever is a hemorrhagic fever caused by an arena virus. Worldwide, an estimated 2 million people are infected each year resulting to 5,000 to 10,000 deaths. It is endemic in a few West African Countries. In 2012, Nigeria experienced the worst outbreak.

**Objective:** To assess the knowledge, attitude and practices of healthcare workers towards Lassa fever in Enugu, South-East, Nigeria.

**Methods:** This cross sectional study was conducted among 325 healthcare workers. Data was collected using a self reported questionnaire on the knowledge, attitude and practices towards Lassa fever. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 21 and statistical significance of association between variables was assessed using Chi-square test at  $p < 0.05$ . Ethical clearance was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of UNTH and informed written consent was obtained from the participants.

**Results:** Overall 325 respondents returned the completed questionnaire. 54.7% were males, 92.6% were aged between 18 to 45 years while their mean age was  $32.4 \pm 12.6$  years. Most of the participants 53.8% were single. Majority of the respondents were Doctors 46.2%, Nurses 23.4%, while Lab scientists, physiotherapists, pharmacists and radiographers were 12.9%, 8.6%, 4.3%, and 4.6% respectively. Also, 97.6% of respondents had tertiary education. Among the participants, only 2.8% have not heard about Lassa fever. Major sources of information are media 87.1%, radio 86.5%, and television 84.9%. Most of the participants knew correctly that Lassa fever can affect all age groups 91.7%, can cause death 92.3%, is a communicable disease 93.8% and transmitted by rats 96.6%. Most of them also knew correctly modes of transmission. However, about 20% of them did not know correctly prevention of Lassa fever. Majority of them believed that hand gloves were most useful personal protective measures while handling patients. Knowledge concerning burial practices and other preventive measures is poor. Only 46.5% of them regularly practiced barrier nursing and hand washing as means of containing the spread of infection. Knowledge on Lassa fever was found to be significantly associated with level of education ( $X^2 = 105.680$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), but not significant to category of profession ( $X^2=9.430$ ,  $df=10$ ,  $p=0.492$ ).

**Conclusion:** Majority of health workers had good knowledge regarding Lassa fever. However, preventive practices were poor. Health education packages and training regarding Lassa fever should be introduced and sustained in all health facilities.

**Biography**

Omotowo I Babatunde has obtained MBBS from University of Ilorin, Nigeria in 1987, MPH from University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 2006 and FWACP from West African College of Physicians in 2009. He has worked as a Medical Advisor for German Leprosy and Tuberculosis Relief Association from 2010 to 2012. He is a Lecturer at the Department of Community Medicine, College of Medicine, University of Nigeria, since August, 2012. He is the MBBS Coordinator in the department since then. He has published some papers in both local and international journals. His interests are in infectious and non-communicable diseases.

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