A Survey of Dental Association Members’ Consciousness on Prevention and Control of Nosocomial Infection

(Part 2) Prevention and Control of Nosocomial Infection in Dental Office Management

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Abstract: Based on the results of our previous research concerning the prevention and control of nosocomial infection in daily dental practice, the present study investigated the consciousness of dental practitioners on countermeasures for infection control of nosocomial infection in dental office management.

A questionnaire survey on prevention and control of nosocomial infection was conducted for 744 dentists, namely, the members of the dental association in Yamaguchi Prefecture. The questionnaire contained 13 questions: an age of objective dentists, prevention and control of nosocomial infection in dental office management, and so on. The response data were collected and statistically analyzed using Spearman’s ρ-test to assess the correlations among the responses for all question items.

The major outcomes were as follows:

1. The response rate to the whole questionnaire was 24.2%. Followings were the alternatives with majority votes for the representative question items: the most commonly used disinfectant was “Alcohols” (33%), and the method of sterilizing or disinfecting dental handpieces was “Wiping only with ethyl alcohol” (34%). Thus, these data demonstrated that a number of dentists might not completely perform infection control in ideal ways.

2. While, the way of sterilizing dental tools was “Using autoclave” (93%), vaccine inoculation against the hepatitis B virus was “Already inoculated before” (61%), and the way of educating dental staff on prevention and control of nosocomial infection was “Teaching dental staff personally by dentists themselves” (60%). Thus, most of the dentists seemed to understand the importance of infection control in dental office management.

3. The results of correlation analyses demonstrated that younger dentists tended to manage only blood- and saliva-adhered burnable trash as biologic and infectious waste in the dental clinic, however, they were positive towards sterilizing dental handpieces, and vaccine inoculation against the hepatitis B virus. Furthermore, dentists with a clear awareness of the importance of Universal (Standard) Precautions were generally positive towards using effective disinfectants, sterilizing or disinfecting dental handpieces, disinfecting impressions, cast models and wax bites, vaccine inoculation against the hepatitis B virus, setting up a manual of countermeasures for nosocomial infection control, and attending training for nosocomial infection control.

These results indicate that increasing awareness and training opportunities for dentists in the prevention and control of nosocomial infection, as shown in documents of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, might improve the environment in the dental offices of general practitioners.

Key words: Prevention and control of nosocomial infection, Dental office management, Standard precautions