



The Health Care Waste Management: Not A Sniper Shot



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Abstract

Despite progressive approach of WHO for the health care waste management and developed the guidelines, which are genuine and applicable in all parts of the world is still dubious. Hence, this review suggests that for all kinds of health care system the best way to address the issue of health care waste management is the community awareness.

Background

The “World Health Organization” appeals several times to international stakeholders for streamlining the mechanism for the management of healthcare waste. However, in 2015, a joint WHO/UNICEF survey found that just over half (58%) of sampled facilities from 24 countries had adequate systems in place for the safe disposal of health care waste [1]. One of the reports from WHO showed that injections with contaminated needles and syringes in low- and middle-income countries have reduced substantially in recent years, partly due to efforts to reduce reuse of injection devices. Despite this progress, unsafe injections were still responsible for as many as 33 800 new HIV infections, 1.7million hepatitis B infections and 315 000 hepatitis C infections [2]. Treatment and disposal of healthcare waste may pose health risks indirectly through the release of pathogens and toxic pollutants into the environment [1]. Regarding the magnitude of the problem of healthcare waste and its negative impact on different sections of people and massive role in environmental degradation and emphasized that the safe and sustainable disposal of healthcare waste is a responsibility of all the stakeholders.

WHO and UNICEF, together with partners in 2015 launched a global initiative to ensure that all health care facilities have adequate water, sanitation and hygiene services, this includes addressing health care waste too [2-4]. Nevertheless, the recommendations of WHO are genuine and applicable in all parts of the world is still dubious.

Discussion

The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed different guidelines to assist in the appropriate management of the healthcare wastes within different settings besides playing a crucial role

in the overall management of healthcare waste [5]. However, as it is depicted that the problem couldn't handle effectively, yet stakeholders failed to achieve some major transformations owing to the presence of multiple challenges like poor awareness, inadequate sensitization of personnel, absence of appropriate legislations, insufficient monetary and human resources support, and non-priority of the issue by the policy makers [5-7]. Nonetheless, the author strongly feels that all these challenges are not the part of the problem of different stakeholders for instance, in developing country where still the amount of daily hazardous wastes lesser than developed countries (0.2kg VS 0.5kg) [3,5] causes more diseases encumbrance. Hence, it would be unjust to execute all with one bullet for unraveling the problem.

Undeniably, there are several issues related to handling the healthcare wastes that could be solved by the suggestions mentioned through the guidelines of WHO, yet it's so complex to handle it in developing countries [8]. For instance, despite the claim of the Alma Ata Declaration on Primary Health Care based on the principle of justice advocated a humanistic ideology to Health for All; the quality of care received by the sub-urban living or Rural living or villagers in many developing countries is questionable. The majority is inescapable to depend and trust on a group of categorical so-called rural practitioners called “Charlatans (Quacks)” who runs a parallel health care system along with the government health care system [9], which then exponentially may increase the problem or even make it worse. So, arguably the strategies of applying high tech equipment and machines may not work for this alternative health care system. For instance, only modern and highly cost incinerators operating at 850-1100 °C and fitted with special gas-cleaning equipment can comply with the international emission standards

for dioxins and furans [1]. Hence, as mentioned earlier that one bullet cannot hit the birds flock.

Author suggests that erstwhile to handle the healthcare wastes by different stakeholders in developing countries, we need to accentuate more on the community awareness as compared to any other measures as it is the ultimate victim of the problem. Likewise, a campaign of the appropriate handling and disposal of medical waste is important for community health, and every member of the community should have the right to be conversant about potential health hazards [9].

Conclusion

Healthcare establishments should lead the way to society by managing their waste in a modus plan so to shield healthiness and make the environment as “Friendly” by development of simple steps as an initiative. These steps could be beginning from at least community awareness by checking that whether bins are available at health vicinities and if available then which color of the bin is for what. .

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