

Abstract

This study aimed to identify the measures taken by dentists in Salfit and Nablus districts to manage dental solid waste, in addition to identify the occupational hazards resulting from their practice. Also, it is to analyze the components of the dental waste and their percentages. Then can be considered as national strategy to all Palestine. Data was collected by two means: the first one was a questionnaire that was distributed simple randomly sample to a 100 of dentists (one dentist from each dental clinic) and the second was through the collection of dental solid waste clinics in Nablus and Salfit governorates and segregating them into several categories. Each category was weighed separately, and the percentage of each component was recorded.

This study shows that the majority of dentists dispose their waste through trash. About 71% of the dentists always wear masks during their practice. All of them were vaccinated against hepatitis type B. The study also demonstrated that 45% of the dentists complain of tension and 29 % of them complain of headaches. These are the two of most important occupational health problems among dentists. There is lack of available resources required for disposal of dental waste, such as special boxes, sacks, and special equipment and devices. A large number of dentists (96% for example does not a have a system for recycling dental waste) did not pay attention to the management of medical waste properly, although they were aware of its importance.

The study reveals that there is 57.2g/patient/day total dental waste, out of them 39.0g/patient/day infectious and 15.4g/patient/day domestic. Dental waste

generation in rural areas (76.5 g/patient /day) is more than urban areas (44.4 g/patient /day).

The demographic factors should be taken into consideration when designing any awareness campaign or refreshing course. Age of dentist, years of experience, graduation country, gender of dentist, and residence location are all important factors that affect practices and attitudes of dentists.

Finally, the study shows that the current disposal methods of dental clinic waste, sterilization methods, preventive and mitigation measures, and other occupational safety and health followed in most of the dental clinics in Salfit and Nablus were not sufficient and not effective. The concerned authorities should carry out rapid intervention and measures in order to increase awareness of health and safety career in dental clinics.