

KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF TRAVEL MEDICINE AMONG PRIMARY HEALTH CARE PHYSICIANS IN QATAR

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Abstract. This prospective descriptive survey was conducted among primary health care (PHC) physicians in Qatar from January to May 2007 in order to determine whether travelers obtained correct travel health information. Of 130 physicians approached, 98 agreed to participate in the study and 76 attended the symposium and complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire included socio-demographic characteristics, knowledge and practices about travel medicine before and after the symposium. Forty-four point seven percent of the subjects provided health advice to travelers. Female physicians (59.2%) outnumbered male physicians (40.8%). Qatari physicians (60.5%) outnumbered non-Qataris (39.5%). Most physicians spent at least 15 minutes with each traveler (44.1%). The symposium increased the knowledge of physicians about travel medicine. A significant increase in knowledge was seen in the post-symposium questionnaire for most questions. The main source of knowledge for most physicians was the internet (78.9%). Nearly half the subjects provided pre-travel health advice. All the subjects had improved knowledge of travel medicine following the symposium.

Keywords: travel medicine, knowledge, practice, PHC physicians, Qatar

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