

Editorial

The current issue of SLJID continues to focus on diagnostic and preventive aspects of infections which are prevalent and of concern to health care workers as well as patients accessing the health care system of the country.

Many patients suffer from disease due to *Helicobacter pylori* for which standard regimes including antibiotics are routinely administered by a wide variety of medical practitioners. The review on antibiotic resistance in *H pylori* is a timely reminder that antibiotic resistant strains may be an important reason for non response to such treatment regimes. Antibiotic resistance in the common aetiological agents of community and hospital acquired urinary tract infections continue to be of concern in Sri Lanka. Data presented and discussed in this journal shows us that empirical prescribing practices in patients with urinary tract infection do not match antimicrobial susceptibility patterns of the commonly isolated uropathogens. The authors' recommendation for regular dissemination of susceptibility data and formulation of guidelines needs to be taken seriously in the health care systems of this country to ensure effective treatment of patients.

Two papers in this issue of the journal address the problem of suitable diagnostics in common infections – leishmaniasis and childhood respiratory tract infections. The continuing battle for reliability, cost effectiveness and adequate coverage is amply demonstrated in these studies. As a country with limited resources, we share with many other countries the need to balance availability of reliable diagnostics to a wide spectrum of users with the constraints of inadequate trained personnel, equipment and consumables. The journal would value contributions which deal with these issues and offer possible workable responses.

The prevention of infection is also of prime concern to all who use health care facilities. Healthcare workers as well as patients continue to be at risk of contracting chickenpox. The relevant paper in this issue adds to existing evidence that herd immunity to herpes varicella zoster virus in adolescents in Sri Lanka is very low. Such data provides an impetus to consider including HVZ immunization in the EPI programme.

Healthcare staff are known to be at risk of infection. The paper on fungal infections in cleaning staff reminds us that we need to be alert to risks other than exposure to patients and emphasizes the role of healthcare education of different categories of staff – a vastly neglected arena in the healthcare system of Sri Lanka.

We hope that you will continue to find the contents of this issue useful and thought provoking. Do let us have your feedback and as well as contributions for publication in forthcoming issues. Please visit the journal's submission and peer review website at <http://www.sljol.info/>. We would also invite you to register as a Reviewer, as the availability of a wide pool of subject specialists for this purpose would assist us in our task of continuously improving the quality of the Journal.

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