

The institutional reality of medical waste management in health institutions in Ramallah and Al Bierh Governorate

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Abstract

The study was conducted between September 2017 and September 2018. It study aimed at finding out the status of the management of the medical waste in health institutions in Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate according to the institutional norms and local and international laws and regulations. It had also aimed to identify the extent of the commitment of health institutions to the management processes of medical waste management in accordance with local and international laws and regulations in dealing with medical waste. And to identify the description of the procedures of the administrative processes for the management of medical waste in health institutions. Another aim is to investigate whether workers in health institutions in Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate have knowledge of medical waste according to local and international regulations. Identifying of the differences in respondents' views on the obstacles facing medical waste in health institutions in Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate, due to the demographic variables (gender, age, academic qualification, job title, experience, type of health institution, health institution activity).

It also tried to identify the suggestions of the administrators in the health institutions in Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate and to know their role in enhancing the behavior of the employees and their attitudes towards applying the local and international regulations and laws regarding the management of medical waste and trying to reach the appropriate solutions.

The study used the descriptive approach. The questionnaire was used as the main study tool and the individual interview was used to collect the data. The research community involved employees of health institutions in Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate. The

sample was determined using the stratified random sample method regarding the profession (doctors, nurses, laboratory technicians, pharmacists, cleaners).

The interview research community consisted of directors of health institutions in the governorate of Ramallah and Al-Bireh. The researcher also analyzed and processed the results of the questionnaire using the statistical program (SPSS)

The results showed that the total degree was high for the domain of the management of medical waste and the duration of its commitment to the local regulations and laws, and the domain of knowledge and understanding of the procedures of dealing with medical waste.

It also showed that the degree of the domain of the management role in promoting workers behavior in safe disposal of medical waste was medium. The results were obtained by accepting the zero hypotheses that there were no statistical significant differences at ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) level at the means of the domains regarding to the variables: gender, age, scientific qualification, work experience in the field of work, health institution activity. Whereas it showed differences in the second domain knowledge and understanding of procedures for dealing with medical waste for the variable of gender for males.

Differences in the first domain of the status of the management of medical waste and the duration of its commitment to local laws and regulations for the variable of age for the age group of 40-49. In addition, it showed the rejection of zero hypothesis that there were no differences in statistical significance at ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) level in the means of the domains according to the variables: job title, type of health institution in the total degree of all the domains.

The researcher concluded that medical waste is disposed of in the household waste containers and that there is no specialized department, committees, or staff in the organizational structure of health institutions, which is responsible for monitoring the management of medical waste according to the decision of the Council of Ministers No. (10) 2012 regarding Medical treatment and circulation. Another conclusion is that there is no budget for medical waste. And that there is no specialized departments in the structures of public health institutions and that the State does not pay much attention to the

existence of such departments within their organizational structures or at least within their proposed strategic plans.

In addition, there is a shortage in the qualified and trained teams in treating the medical waste, and lack of control and coordination by the State's supervisory authorities, as stated by local and international laws and regulations. Moreover, the absence of landfills for medical waste, and the absence competent authorities in ultimate disposal of medical waste, in addition to the absence of a suitable coverage by the media.

The study suggested the need to work on the implementation of the decision of the Council of Ministers No. (10) 2012 on the system of management and circulation of medical waste. It also suggested introducing a specialized department of medical waste in the organizational structures of the state's public institutions in addition to the medical institution. The study recommended obliging the educational institutions to add a special course that teaches medical waste to its curricula, providing dumps for medical waste, allocating and licensing of specialized bodies that deal with medical waste outside the health institutions.