

# Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of Health Professionals in Albania Regarding Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Settings

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## Abstract

**Background:** Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) in healthcare facilities constitutes an important public health issue, especially in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

**Aim:** The aim of this study was to assess the level of knowledge, attitude and practices (KAP) of health professionals in Albania regarding IPC aspects in healthcare settings.

**Study design:** Before-and-after surveys (cross-sectional studies).

**Methods:** The surveys were carried out in March 2021 (before IPC training) and next in April 2021 (after IPC training) including a nationwide representative sample of 505 physicians and nurses (84 men and 421 women) working in primary health care centres and maternity

services in Albania. A structured questionnaire developed by the World Health Organization was administered (in March 2021) and re-administered (in April 2021) online to all participants assessing the KAP level regarding the IPC approach employed at health facility level. Wilcoxon's signed rank test (for two related samples) was used to compare the median differences in the KAP level before and after the IPC training received by survey participants.

**Results:** The KAP level exhibited a significant increase after the training of health personnel compared with the KAP level before the IPC training course, including the following dimensions: the importance of the number of personnel at health facility level; fulfilment of the

standard of one patient per bed; the importance of adequate spacing between patient beds; availability of water services at health facility; the importance of the number of toilets at health facility level; the importance of functional hand hygiene and sanitation facilities; the importance of power supply, the importance of materials for cleaning; the importance of personal protective equipment; and the importance of medical waste management, including adequate labelling (all  $P < 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** This study provides useful evidence on the KAP level of physicians and nurses in Albania regarding IPC aspects related to healthcare settings. This evidence helps in the identification of the remaining gaps and needs for further training and support of professionals in Albania at different levels of health care provision.

**Keywords:** Albania, before-and-after survey; epidemiology, healthcare related infections, infection prevention and control, knowledge, attitude, practices (KAP)