

**COMMUNITY HEALTH LITERACY ON
SEASONAL INFLUENZA IN PATHEIN
TOWNSHIP**

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ABSTRACT

Seasonal influenza is a contagious respiratory disease causing million cases of severe illness annually. In Myanmar, Influenza A(H₁N₁)pdm09 is predominating with co-circulation of influenza A(H₃N₂) and B/Victoria-linkage viruses. Its first-line preventive practices are mainly based upon community's infection awareness and risk perception. A cross-sectional study was conducted to determine the health literacy on seasonal influenza among community in Patheingyi Township, Ayeyarwady Region. Three hundred and sixty people who aged 18 years and above were face to face interviewed using structured questionnaires during September to December, 2019. Mean age (Standard deviation) of the respondents was 42.5 (14.5) years and most of them were primary school passed (39.2%) and middle school passed (28.9%). Almost all participants (97.8%) had ever heard about seasonal influenza but only 4.2% knew the causal agent of seasonal influenza. Major source of information about seasonal influenza was family or friends (55.8%) followed by basic health staffs (52.8%) and television (46.1%). Although only 4.7% of the respondents were considered knowledgeable, almost all respondents (96.1%) had positive attitude towards seasonal influenza and its key preventive practices. Despite having positive attitude, there were wrong attitudes to be corrected. Almost all participants (95.3%) misbelieved wearing facemask as the most important practice to prevent getting disease from others. About 40.0% of participants agreed that students who experienced seasonal flu should be refrained from school for one month and 37.2% agreed seasonal influenza patient or one living with patients should be terminated from work. Prevalence of seasonal influenza vaccination was 3.1%. About 41.7% of respondents had good key preventive practices on seasonal influenza. Participants with higher education level (*P*-value 0.049) and participants with chronic medical conditions (*P*-value 0.001) had better preventive practices. It can be concluded that community in Patheingyi Township had low knowledge and poor preventive practices on seasonal influenza in spite of their positive attitude. Therefore, it is needed to scale up community's knowledge, to reduce public panic and to correct wrong attitudes related to seasonal influenza through the channels community credit. It is also needed to enhance individual behaviour change for better preventive practices on seasonal influenza.