

Approximately 65% of respondents did not report their exposure either because of the time consuming process or the patient involved was perceived to be low-risk or both” Choi et al (2016).

Abstract:

BACKGROUND: The hospital is a place of high risk for sharps and needlestick injuries (SNI) and such injuries are historically underreported.

METHODS: This institutional review board approved study compares the incidence of SNI among all surgical personnel at a single academic institution via an anonymous electronic survey distributed to medical students, surgical residents, general surgery attendings, surgical technicians, and operating room nurses.

RESULTS: The overall survey response rate was 37% (195/528). Among all respondents, 55% (107/195) had a history of a SNI in the workplace. The overall report rate following an initial SNI was 64%. Surgical staff reported SNIs more frequently, with an incidence rate ratio (IRR) of 1.33 ($p = 0.085$) when compared with attendings. When compared with surgical attendings, medical students (IRR of 2.86, $p = 0.008$) and residents (IRR of 2.21, $p = 0.04$) were more likely to cite fear as a reason for not reporting SNIs. Approximately 65% of respondents did not report their exposure either because of the time consuming process or the patient involved was perceived to be low-risk or both.

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CONCLUSIONS: The 2 most common reasons for not reporting SNIs at our institution are because of the inability to complete the time consuming reporting process and fear of embarrassment or punitive response because of admitting an injury. Further research is necessary to mitigate these factors.

Reference:

Choi, L.Y., Torres, R., Syed, S., Boyle, S., Ata, A., Beyer, T.D. and Rosati, C. (2016) Sharps and Needlestick Injuries Among Medical Students, Surgical Residents, Faculty, and Operating Room Staff at a Single Academic Institution. *Journal of Surgical Education*. July 5th. .

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