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**ASSESSING KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES OF HEALTHCARE
PROFESSIONALS WORKING IN NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE
UNIT ON HUMIDIFICATION THERAPY**

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Keywords: Heated humidifier, health care professionals, neonates, questionnaire based survey, humidification therapy.

Abstract:

Background: Humidification of inspired gases is the main purpose of the respiratory system, to maintain its function. In neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) active humidification is the most extensively used and preferred over passive type (HME). Appropriate configuration of the device, safe and careful monitoring by HCPs is needed to avoid the associated complications. There are several studies about the types of humidification therapy, associated complications, and its current practices in patients. But none of the studies indicate about importance of awareness among the HCPs.

Objective: To assess the knowledge of HCPs working in NICU on humidification therapy and to assess the practices followed by HCPs during humidification therapy.

Methods: This is a Cross-sectional questionnaire-based survey which was carried out among the HCPs working in Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Kasturba Hospital Manipal, from March 2021 – March 2022. The survey comprises of total 35 questionnaires to assess the knowledge level and practices of the humidification therapy in NICU. Five statement questionnaire was assessed with the help of 5 points “Likert” scale. The knowledge level was assessed based on the cut-off value.

Results: 81 HCPs included in the study. 14.81% had “good knowledge”, 69.13% had “moderate knowledge” and 16.04% had “poor knowledge”. In terms of whether the HCPs had received any sessions or demo on humidification therapy, there was no association between the correct responses provided by the HCPs in the knowledge of the humidification therapy and the sessions attended. As the work experience increases there was a significant increase in the knowledge of the practice on humidification therapy ($p=0.008$).

Conclusion: As per this study, the overall knowledge level of humidification therapy was moderate and there was a significant difference viewed in the knowledge of the practice domain based on the work experience in NICU. Training/ sessions on humidification therapy are needed for the HCPs to improve their knowledge and henceforth the quality of care provided to the new-borns in the intensive care unit.