

Abstract

Thailand's 2010-2014 national program for cervical cancer screening guidelines recommends that women aged 30-60 years should be screened every five years with the Papanicolaou smear (Pap smear) method or visual inspection with acetic acid and that coverage should be at least 80%. However, from 2010-2014, the national coverage of cervical cancer screening was only 53.9%. We therefore evaluated healthcare workers' knowledge of the guidelines and their practices regarding cervical cancer screening by Pap smear. We collected data using a structured questionnaire from 258 healthcare workers who had ordered or conducted cervical cancer screening for at least one year. Most (74.8%) healthcare workers knew that Pap smears should be done every five years among women aged 30 to 60 years. General practitioners and gynecologists had lower knowledge of the age criteria compared to nurses and technicians. Knowledge of the target age criteria was significantly associated with type of healthcare worker, workplace, gender and recent training (within the previous 3 years). The screening practice was significantly associated with type of healthcare worker and workplace. Providing up-to-date training on the national cervical cancer screening guidelines is necessary for all public hospital healthcare workers.

Keywords: cervical cancer, cancer screening, Papanicolaou smear