

The impact of a school-based asthma health education programme on quality of life, knowledge and attitudes of Saudi children with asthma social care teams

Nashi Alreshidi, Joan Livesley, Tony Long,

Abstract

Asthma is especially common in Saudi Arabia, affecting 13% of children aged 6-10 years. This makes asthma one of the most common illnesses among children in Saudi Arabia (Al Frayh et al, 2001; Ministry of Health, 2010). Little emphasis has been placed on educating Saudi children themselves to learn more about their asthma and its control. This study was designed to assess the impact of a school-based, nurse-delivered asthma health education programme on asthmatic children's knowledge and attitude towards asthma, quality of life, anxiety level, and school absenteeism.

A quasi-experimental, non-equivalent group, pretest-posttest design was used. The education programme was developed from existing evidence. The Paediatric Asthma Quality of Life Questionnaire, Spence Anxiety Tool, Asthma Knowledge Questionnaire, and Asthma Attitude Questionnaire were employed for data collection in 2013. Intervention (n=130) and control (n=98) groups were drawn from 10 schools in Hail region, Saudi Arabia. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to examine differences between groups.

The level of asthma knowledge was increased significantly more in the intervention group than in the control group, but there was no significant effect on children's attitudes toward asthma. The programme led to significantly decreased anxiety and absenteeism from school in children of the intervention group compared to those on the control group. Quality of life increased significantly more for children who experienced the programme.

Why the asthma educational programme impacted positively on students' knowledge, anxiety, quality of life, and school attendance, but not on attitudes towards the condition requires further investigation. Asthma education will now be integrated into the national child health programme, emphasising the provision of health education directly to children as well as measures to inform their parents.

References

Al Frayh A, Shakoor Z, ElRab M, Hasnain S (2001) Increased prevalence of asthma in Saudi Arabia. *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology* 86(3) 292-296

Ministry of Health (2010) Strategic plan: 2010-2020. Riyadh, KSA: Ministry of Health.

Author details

Nashi Alreshidi,
PhD Student,
University of Salford
Joan Livesley, Tony Long, University
of Salford (UK)
N.M.Alreshidi@edu.salford.ac.uk