

### **I36. Exploring pain management competencies among healthcare professionals in selected hospitals in Meru County, Kenya**

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#### **Abstract**

Pain is an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual and potential tissue damage. One in every five patient globally experience pain. Despite the available pain management strategies, the prevalence of pain among patients remains high. Twenty percent of the adult population in the developed countries suffers from chronic pain while in developing countries, the prevalence ranges from 13 % to 51 %. In sub-Saharan Africa a prevalence of 83% has been reported, while in Kenya the prevalence stands at 95%. The high prevalence is partly due to inadequate knowledge and negative attitude among Healthcare professionals towards pain management. Inadequate pain management affects patient outcomes by potentially increasing hospital stay and delaying recovery and significantly interfere with the patient's physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. The objective of the study is to explore healthcare professional's competencies in pain assessment and management in selected hospitals in Meru County. . A quantitative approach will be employed. A prospective cross sectional design, will be used to conduct this study at Meru Teaching and Referral Hospital and St Theresa mission hospital-Kiirua The study population shall be qualified Doctors, clinical officers and Nurses at Meru teaching and referral hospital and St Theresa mission hospital-Kiirua managing patients in the outpatient, Accident and emergency department, adult medical and surgical wards. A sample size of 298 healthcare professionals will be selected as study participants. Data shall be collected using a self- administered that shall be filled by healthcare professionals to assess their level of knowledge, skills and attitudes on pain management. Data collected shall be entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 and descriptive and inferential statistics used to analyze. Research findings will be presented in figures and tables. All ethical consideration will be observed by seeking ethical clearance from Meru University of Science and Technology (MUST) Institutional Research Ethics Review Committee (MIRERC) and a permit will be obtained from National Commission of Science and Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Informed consent will be sought from the study participants before administering the questionnaire.

**Keywords:** *Pain management, Pain management strategies*