

Knowledge, Attitudes And Practices of Tour Operators Toward Travel-Related Infectious Diseases, Taiwan, 2017

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Abstract

As the number of international travelers increases, prevention of travel-related infectious diseases becomes more important. Because tour operators play a critical role in arranging itineraries of Taiwanese travelers, we investigated their knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding travel-related infectious diseases, and analyzed affecting factors, in order to provide references for formulating relevant strategies.

We interviewed tour operators participating in conferences held by the Association of Tour Managers using questionnaires, collecting their basic information, knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding travel-related infectious diseases.

Based on 179 valid questionnaires, we found that those aged 40–49 years had better knowledge compared with those aged above 60 years, and full-time tour managers had better knowledge than non-tour guides or managers. Those aged 50–59 years had more positive attitudes towards travel health issues compared with those aged 20–39 years, and those having 2–5 years of working experience had more positive attitudes than those with more than 5 years of working experience. Respondents' information on international epidemics were mainly from official website of Taiwan Centers for Disease Control and travel medicine clinics, but those aged above 60 years obtained such information mainly from the Tourism Bureau. Only about 80% respondents had suggested travelers to consult travel medicine clinics before travel. Those aged 40–49 and 50–59 years were less likely to do so.

Age groups, being tour guides, managers or not, and working experience significantly affected knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding travel-related infectious diseases. Different information sources could lead to gaps in knowledge, attitudes and practices among different sub-groups. We recommended that appropriate health education strategies should be adopted according to different sub-groups, so that the knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding travel-related infectious diseases among tour operators could be promoted effectively.

Keywords: Travel medicine, tour operators, infectious diseases., knowledge, attitude and practice

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