

ABSTRACT

Healthcare Waste (HCW) constitutes a special category of waste because they contain potentially harmful materials. The problem of how to manage HCW has become one of critical concerns in developing countries. A cross sectional descriptive study of medical waste management (MWM) practice and their implication to health and environment was carried out between August and September 2012 in Calabar metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria with the aim of assessing the current practices and commitment to sustainable HCW management in three (1 tertiary, 1 General and 1 Private) hospitals ranging in capacity from 30 to 500 beds. The study approach involved the estimation of the quantity of HCW generated, evaluation of the waste segregation practices and determination of the knowledge of healthcare workers regarding HCW management. Daily waste inventory of each ward was carried out. An evaluation of the status of the waste management practice in the health facility was carried out using the following criteria: waste management (responsibility, segregation, storage and packaging); waste transport; waste recycling and reuse; waste treatment and final disposal. The result obtained from the study showed wastes generation at the rate of 1.31, 1.16 and 0.78kg/day/patient for large, medium and small sized hospitals respectively. Comparing the results gotten from the tertiary hospital and results gotten from developed countries, Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used which showed a less non-significant value. Out of the 189 people that participated in the survey of medical waste management, 19% of the people were highly concerned. 38% of the people were slightly concerned and 33% of them were neutral in their approach. The remaining people were not at all concerned with the medical waste management. Profession and age seemed to have an effect on the result.