

Increased Adherence to Infection Control Practices Among Medical Laboratory Technicians During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Self-Reported Survey Study

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Abstract: Background: The adherence of medical laboratory technicians (MLT) to infection control guidelines is essential for reducing the risk of exposure to infectious agents. This study explored the adherence of MLT towards infection control practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. Method: The study population consisted of MLT (n = 444) who worked in private and government health sectors in Jordan. A self-reported survey was used to collect data from participants. Findings: More than 87% of the participants reported adherence to hand-washing guidelines and using personal protective equipment (PPE) when interacting with patients (74.5%), and handling clinical samples (70.0%). Besides, 88.1%, 48.2%, and 7.7% reported wearing of lab coats, face masks, and goggles, at all times, respectively. The majority reported increased adherence to infection control practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes increased PPE use at the workplace (94.2%), increased frequency of disinfection of laboratory surfaces (92.4%) and laboratory equipment (86.7%), and increased frequency of handwashing/use of antiseptics (94.6%). Having a graduate degree was significantly associated with increased adherence of participants to the daily use of goggles/eye protection ($p = 0.002$), and the use of PPE while handling clinical samples ($p = 0.011$). Having work experience of >10 years was associated with increased adherence to the use of PPE while handling clinical samples ($p = 0.001$). Conclusion: MLT reported very good adherence with most assessed infection control practices. In addition, they reported increased conformity with infection control guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic.