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**KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES OF PARENTS ON DROWNING PREVENTION IN A RURAL COMMUNITY IN NORTHERN PHILIPPINES**

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**Objective** Describe the knowledge, attitudes and practices of parents in a rural coastal community on drowning prevention.

**Methodology** Cross-sectional study design was used. Systematic random sampling was employed and 375 households were included as respondents. A pretested questionnaire was utilised in the study.

**Results** Knowledge on general aspects of drowning such as its preventability and to whom and where it could happen was high (65–99%). Awareness of drowning prevention programs and activities in the community was quite low and awareness of any legislation was even lower. The respondents had positive attitudes towards supervising children, in buying and wearing flotation devices, in conducting CPR training, and in participating in drowning prevention measures. Two thirds (65–70%) claimed to have supervised their children while swimming in the sea, river, lake or swimming pools. However, 62–87% admitted that their children had never worn flotation devices when they swim or play in most bodies of water. More than 96% of the parents have not participated in any activity on drowning prevention.

**Conclusions** The respondents' knowledge on general aspects of drowning such as its preventability and to whom and where it could happen is high. However, their knowledge of preventive measures in specific situations or bodies of water and awareness on legislation could be improved. Drowning prevention programs may capitalise on the positive attitudes and even reinforce them. Practices on wearing of flotation devices and participation in water safety awareness activities should be improved given the easy access to open waters.