

Pre-Employment Screening of Expatriate Food Handlers

Adel Alaraibi* Ahmed Shirazi* Hamad Alsada* Islam Salama* Mahmood Alamm*
Mahmood Ali* Mahmood Behzad* Mohamed Radhi* Randah Hamadeh**

Background: In 2010, the total population of the Kingdom of Bahrain was 1.234 million, 54% were expatriates. Since expatriates constitute over half of the population, the importance of screening has increased. All expatriates undergo two sessions of screening, the first in their home country in clinics approved by the Gulf Cooperation Council and the second prior to employment in Bahrain. Various screening tests are performed in Bahrain, including HIV, Hepatitis A, B, and C viruses, Syphilis, and Tuberculosis.

Objective: To determine the proportion of false negative screening amongst food handlers.

Design: A Cross-Sectional Study.

Setting: Al-Razi Health Center, Bahrain.

Method: Expatriate food handlers were screened at Al-Razi health center from 1 January to 31 December 2013. A simple random sampling technique was applied. Four hundred ninety-seven medical records were reviewed, and relevant information was abstracted on a specifically designed abstract form. The proportions of positive and negative results for each test were compared by country and gender.

Result: There were no notable demographic discrepancies. However, the majority of food handlers came from India, 171 (34%), males were the majority, 381 (77%). The percentage of false negatives amongst those screened in their home countries compared to the Al-Razi tests was 29 (6.0%). India registered the highest percentage of false negatives, 12 (2.5%). The differences by countries were not statistically significant.

Conclusion: The study revealed that false negatives certificates were less than expected.

*AGU Medical Students

**AGU Faculty