

The Invisible Threat in the Gaps

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Introduction

Paramedics are known as the “Swiss Army knife” of healthcare professionals who provide a broad range of patient care. In the area of infection prevention and control, paramedics have been shown to be substandard when compared to other health professions. Current research shows that paramedics lack hand hygiene compliance, infection control knowledge, and education.¹⁻³

Materials and methods

An online survey was distributed through convenience sampling and a total of 39 participants were included in the final analysis. Quantitative data was analysed with descriptive techniques and inference probability through a Bayesian Network Model.⁴

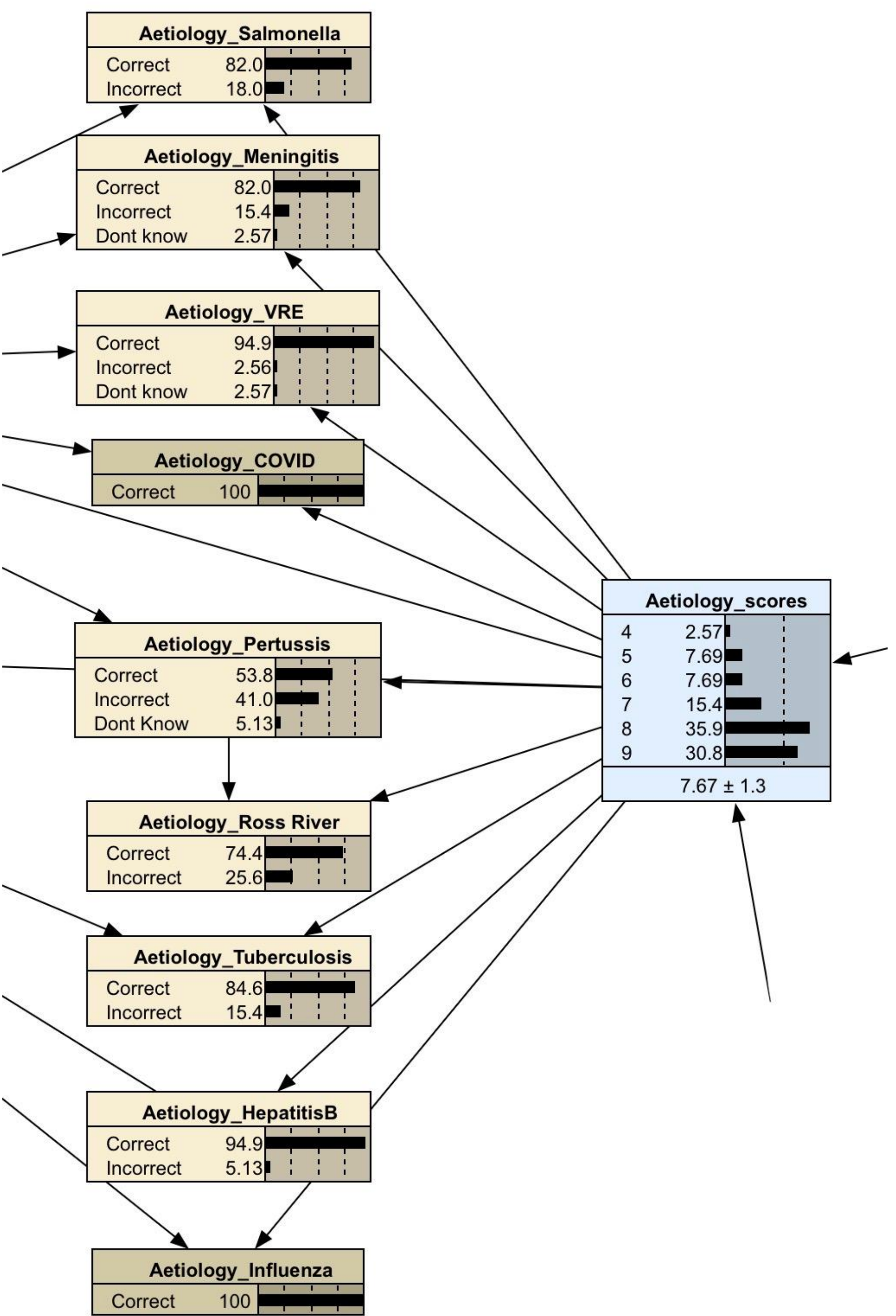
Results

Most respondents stated that they had acquired knowledge of infectious diseases from university and job training. Respondents used government websites, research papers and the internet to access current information. 64% of respondents said they do not currently receive regular updates on infectious diseases, with 80% wanting education and training.⁴

Themes to why the need for education/training on infectious diseases



Infectious Disease Aetiology BN Model (%)



Conclusions

While paramedics appear to have an overall passable knowledge of infectious diseases, there seem to be important gaps, particularly in relation to understanding specific infectious diseases and risks.

Following on from this research that was a part of my Honours Dissertation, I have been accepted into a PhD with CSU exploring Infection Prevention and Control Education and Training in the Australian Paramedic Profession, so watch this space.

Literature cited

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Further information

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