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"Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iasi, Romania

EVALUATING MEDICAL WASTE MANAGEMENT IN A SMALL-SCALE SPECIALIZED HOSPITAL: A CASE STUDY FROM PALESTINE

Issam A. Al-Khatib[1], Fathi M. Anayah[2*]

[1]*Institute of Environmental and Water Studies, Birzeit University, Birzeit, West Bank, Palestine*
[2]*College of Engineering and Technology, Palestine Technical University – Kadoorie, Tulkarm, West Bank, Palestine*

Abstract

Medical waste, if poorly managed, poses serious health risks to healthcare workers, patients, and the surrounding community, alongside its environmental hazards. This study evaluates medical waste management practices in a specialized Palestinian hospital, highlighting the health implications of inadequate waste handling. Using a descriptive methodology, field observations were used to gather data on waste generation and management. The hospital produced 4.65 kg of solid waste per patient per day, 44% of which was classified as medical waste. Waste generation peaked on Saturdays, at 21.73 kg/day, and was lowest on Thursdays, at 9.60 kg/day. Peak waste production occurred during critical times, such as medical examinations and meal hours (8-10 AM, 12-2 PM, 6-8 PM). The findings emphasize that poor waste segregation and improper disposal can lead to the spread of infections and harmful exposure to hazardous materials, endangering both health workers and the community. To mitigate these risks, the study recommends optimizing waste collection schedules, enhancing staff training, and improving waste segregation practices for safer and more effective management.

Key words: healthcare facility, medical waste, Palestine, specialized hospital, waste management

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* Author to whom all correspondence should be addressed: e-mail: f.anayah@ptuk.edu.ps; Phone: ++970 9 2671026; Fax: ++970 9 2677922