**PROJECT DEFINITION:** Providing health information during disease outbreaks is a fundamental component of outbreak control strategies. This study aimed to identify the importance of providing information that increases community health awareness on personal hygiene and safety measures and reduces fear of the spread of disease.

**INTRODUCTION:** Providing accurate and correct information during public health emergencies such as pandemic influenza is a fundamental modality of outbreak control strategies. Early knowledge about the disease outbreak will help to understand the risk behaviour and assist the general public in responding quickly to the outbreak (Balkhy et al. 2010). The role of the general public’s adoption of preventive measures is pivotal in containing the spread of epidemics

**METHOD:** During early December 2015 and January 2016, there was an outbreak of H1N1 influenza in Trinidad and Tobago in which 59 cases were identified and 9 patients died. This study was designed in the immediate aftermath of this outbreak to elucidate the awareness of the general public regarding the risks and preventative measures. After institutional approval, a self-assessment questionnaire was designed de novo to capture information regarding the respondent’s knowledge on H1N1 influenza, its symptoms, high-risk groups, the modalities of spread, importance of personal hygiene and safety measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

**DISCUSSION:** Discussion The present study found that the general public in Trinidad and Tobago did have reasonable knowledge regarding H1N1 influenza. Although knowledge regarding the causative organism and modalities of the spread of H1N1 influenza was adequate, the responses showed some knowledge deficiencies about other aspects of the disease, e.g., regarding the high-risk groups and susceptibility to this illness. Researchers have shown that the paradigms of disease prevention and health promotion largely depend on understanding the health behaviours as well as associations among such behaviours (Smith et al. 2009). As is well known, H1N1 influenza is a respiratory illness caused by the type A influenza-H1N1 strain virus. The current influenza pandemic, commonly known as swine flu, was caused by a new strain of the virus named Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 by the World Health Organisation (WHO 2009). The virus spreads from person to person and is transmitted as easily as the normal seasonal flu, passed to other people by exposure to infected droplets expelled by coughing or sneezing that can be inhaled or by contaminated hands or surfaces. These droplets typically spread about 1 m. They hang suspended in the air for a while and then land on surfaces where the virus can survive for 2 to 8 h. Anyone who touches these surfaces can spread the virus further by touching anything else. Hence, personal hygiene measures are extremely important in preventing the spread of the disease.

**RESULT:** One hundred twenty (120) questionnaires were mailed to the respondents, of which 113 responses were returned (94% response rate); however, three questionnaires were incomplete. Hence, one hundred ten (110) completed responses were finally analysed. Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the 110 respondents. The majority (68.2%) of the respondents were males. Regarding ethnicity, the majority (56.3%) were of Indian origin and 40% were of African origin, consistent with the general trend. The age groups of the respondents ranged from 18 to 61 and the major proportion (36.4%) belonged to the middle age group (between 35 to 44 years). Although there were some variations amongst the responses according to the demographic characteristics, this was not statistically significant.

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