

## **AVERAGE EXPENDITURE INCURRED ON SAFE DRINKING WATER: A CASE IN MADAWACHCHIYA AREA IN ANURADHAPURA DISTRICT**

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Safe drinking water has become a marketable commodity in Chronic Kidney Disease in uncertain etiology (CKDu) affected areas of Sri Lanka. Majority of Sri Lankans are not willing to pay for drinking water due to low family income and low level of awareness regarding the benefits of safe drinking water. However, the situation can be different in CKDu affected areas because, purified drinking water has been delivered to the doorstep by many government and non-government organizations at a subsidized price. Therefore, this study aimed to determine the average cost incurred by a household to purchase drinking water and factors affecting the expenditure in getting access to safe drinking water in Madawachchiya divisional secretariat in Anuradhapura District, which has been identified as a CKDu affected area. Data were collected from a random sample of 50 households in each three regions (urban, semi urban and rural) using a structured questionnaire. Average monthly expenditure incurred on good quality drinking water by a family unit in urban, semi urban and rural were Rs.1075.35, Rs.893.30, and Rs.939.90 respectively. According to the multiple regression analysis, household size was the most influencing factor on spending on safe drinking water. According to the questionnaire survey, 87% people of the studied sample have started to consume water purified by Reverse Osmosis (RO) techniques due to low quality of water that they consumed in the past and impact of awareness program on the benefits of safe drinking water. However, 10% of the people are still using water from shallow dug wells and the remaining of population use pipe borne water with some averting measures such as boiling and filtering. Though people have to pay for drinking water, the sufficiency of water usage was very high in study area possibly due to prevailing dry weather conditions. The results of this study suggest that the local authorities should take immediate steps to provide water purification filters to the areas where there are no such facilities.

**Keywords:** Average monthly expenditure, CKDu, RO water, Safe drinking water