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## EVALUATION OF MEDICAL WASTE MANAGEMENT DURING THE COVID-19 IN DIYALA GOVERNORATE

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### Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the ecosystem all around the planet. Medical waste management, in particular, is critical during this pandemic because of its direct influence on human health and the environment. The goal of this study is to assess medical waste management in Diyala, an Iraqi governorate, during the COVID-19 pandemic and its potential role in the transmission of the Corona virus. To perform this study in a methodical manner, a questionnaire was created and distributed to 260 COVID-19 patients from different sectors of Diyala of various socioeconomic backgrounds and educational levels who were quarantined at their homes, hospitals, and special isolation facilities for adequate treatment. In this regard, the influences of the income and education levels on quarantined location, use of disposable products and discharging waste's method are statistically analysed. The findings reveal that waste collection and incineration processes in Diyala have not changed significantly after the Corona virus outbreak. In other words, the medical waste collected from hospitals and isolated areas was separated and burned in violation of environmental regulations. Furthermore, due to a lack of instructions and direction, the medical waste of the majority of COVID-19 patients who isolated themselves at home was not adequately handled or placed in sterilized bags. As a result, there is a significant danger of the COVID-19 spreading.

*Key words:* COVID-19, disposable items, medical waste management, quarantined locations, questionnaire

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