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### Patients' knowledge on dispensed medications and associated factors in a tertiary hospital in Sri Lanka

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#### Abstract

**Background:** Patients' knowledge on medication information is crucial to adhere to therapy. Effective usage of medicines can be achieved by improving patient's knowledge on medications that are prescribed to them.

**Objectives:** To assess patient knowledge on information about dispensed medication and association of socio-demographic and patient-related factors among patients attending medical clinic pharmacy, Teaching Hospital, Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

**Method:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among adult patients who were attending medical clinic pharmacy, Teaching Hospital Jaffna, Sri Lanka. According to sample size calculation, 418 patients were recruited for this study. An interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire included socio-demographic factors, patient-related factors, and knowledge session to assess patients' knowledge on dispensed medication. Knowledge on medication was assessed by getting information on name, dose, frequency and indication of each drug from patients. Each correct answer one point was given. The final score on knowledge on medications was calculated as a percentage. The cut-off value for knowledge was predetermined as 80%. Patients who scored above 80% were considered good knowledge and patients scored below 80% were considered poor knowledge. Data were analyzed by SPSS. Chi-square and fishers' exact tests were used to assess the association between variables. A 95% confidence interval set for the test, whereby the result was significant if p value <0.05. Ethical clearance for this study was obtained from Ethical Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna.

**Results:** Among 418 participants, 364 were responded to this study and the response rate was 87.1%. Among the patients, 51.4% (n=187) were male and 58.2% (n=212) patients were under the age of 65 years. 61% (n=222) of patients had poor knowledge on dispensed medication. The mean value of patient knowledge was 50.69 ±37.73%. In the patient's knowledge on medications, average scores obtained for drug name, indication, dose and frequency were 57.83%, 53.91%, 33.59% and 57.41% respectively. Age (p=0.00), level of education (p=0.00), employment status (p=0.002), awareness of the disease condition (p=0.00), pharmacy visit frequency (p=0.00), number of medications (p=0.00), and English reading capability (p=0.00) were statistically significant association with patient knowledge.

**Conclusion:** Patient knowledge on dispensed medication information among patients was poor. Healthcare professionals should initiate counseling to improve medication-related knowledge among patients and thus maximize the effective usage of medicines. Especially, more attention is needed for patients with old age, low educational level, unemployment/ retirement, newly prescribed medicines, and polypharmacy.

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