



PRACTICE REPORT

Contribution of community pharmacists in educating the asthma patients



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Abstract *Background:* In asthma, the preventive measures taken by patients play an important role in improving life span and quality of life. This can be done more efficiently by community pharmacist by providing patient counseling and improving knowledge of patient about disease, risk factors, medication management and preventive measures to control asthma. *Objectives:* The objective of the study was to evaluate the contribution of community pharmacists in improvement of life span and quality of life of asthma patients. *Method:* The study was performed from Mid September to Mid-November 2014 in Dawadmi, Riyadh province, KSA. Data were collected by using a structured face to face questionnaire with randomly selected different community pharmacies. The questionnaire composed of different closed questions about the action plan of pharmacists in asthma management and factors that affect the counseling of asthma patients by the pharmacists. *Results:* It is noteworthy to observe that, in general, pharmacists are sufficiently knowledgeable and competent to counsel their asthma patients effectively.

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1. Introduction

Asthma is a significant public health issue worldwide. The correct management of asthma requires a multidisciplinary approach that includes the doctor, the patient and the patient's family. To optimize asthma management, international

recommendations have been published (NHLBI/WHO Workshop Report. NIH publication 95–3659: Ait-Khaled and Enarson, 2005, 2006). Despite these progresses, asthma-related morbidity and mortality remain high (Ganyere et al., 1998). Today, asthma can be considered a condition that is not perfectly managed, since deaths due to this illness are usually from preventable causes, including poor treatment and observation (Koffi et al., 2001). Disease management programs are one of the clinical services being offered by pharmacists, and these particularly lend themselves to chronic conditions, such as asthma and diabetes (Boulet et al., 2002; Haahtela, 2002). Underpinning these new trends in the practice of pharmacy is the philosophy of pharmaceutical care that calls for pharmacists to take responsibility for patient's clinical

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and humanistic outcomes. Community pharmacists are the most accessible health-care professionals in the desire to counsel primary care setting. Their frequent contact with patients due to the need for prescription refills, and their expertise in medication, ensures that they are optimally positioned to positively impact on asthma management (Mehuys et al., 2008; Hepler and Strand, 1990). Therefore the present study, aimed to assess the attitudes of private pharmacists toward asthma patients in Al-Dawadmi and its surrounding area, with the following objectives: To evaluate about the prescriptions known for asthma patients; to evaluate pharmacists' knowledge of inhalation techniques and to describe the advice given by pharmacists to asthma patients.

2. Methodology

2.1. Study site

A survey among community pharmacists in Al-Dawadmi, Riyadh province, KSA, was conducted over a period of one month from Mid-September to Mid-October 2014. Data collection was carried out using a structured face-to-face questionnaire with 20 randomly selected community pharmacies from different areas of Al-Dawadmi region.

2.2. The questionnaire

A modified questionnaire from a previous report was prepared (NIH, 1995). The questionnaire included eight closed questions to pharmacists toward the contribution of dispensing process. The survey was conducted by a single investigator, who systematically met with the chief pharmacists to explain the objectives of the survey before administering the questionnaire. Apart from the rare cases where the pharmacist responded on the spot, the investigator was often obliged to return at a time suitable for the pharmacist.

The first two questions were about the education of pathophysiology of asthma to a patient by pharmacists. Questions

three and four dealt with type and which drug prescribed by a doctor to dispensing drugs by the pharmacists. Question five asks the pharmacists about the asthma management plan ensure the patient is given written and verbal instructions that describe, when the patient takes drug, how the intervention patient takes drug; how much and when to seek medication cure to take. Questions six to eight explain about the role of each medication, side effect, adverse drug reaction and any drugs other than asthma medication. The last question is about knowledge of inhalation technique (Table 1).

Second part of survey, asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with a number of statements which identified factors/situations that could potentially influence pharmacists' desire/ability to counsel their asthma patients (Buckley and Ryder, 2012). The concept of research and its impact in improving health care are partly understood by Dawadmi community pharmacists. Therefore, a close ended and simple question format was chosen to enable the pharmacists to answer easily and promptly (Table 2).

2.3. Data collection and analysis

The pharmacists were interviewed inside the community pharmacies after getting the agreement of the pharmacists. The purpose of the study was explained to each pharmacist and they were invited to complete the questionnaire after assuring the willingness to participate. The survey responses were treated anonymously and confidentially. Upon receipt of the completed questionnaires the % response of each variable was calculated.

3. Results and discussion

Since asthma is an allergic disease, preventive measures taken by patients play an important role in improving life span and quality of life which can be done more efficiently by clinical pharmacists by providing patient counseling through improving knowledge of patient about disease, risk factors,

Table 1 The list of questions used for the survey.

.Q	Parameter	Category	Answer
1	Are you educating patient basic fact about asthma? What normal lung and asthma attack?		Yes/No
2	Can you identify and manage the triggers of asthma for the patient?		Yes/No
3.	Which drug is widely prescribing medication by the doctor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● β Blocker & Bronchodilator ● Corticosteroid ● Leukotriene modifiers ● Anti-inflammatory 	
4	Are you following effective asthma management plan ensure the patient is given written and verbal instructions that describe:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When the patient takes drug ● How the patient takes drug ● How much ● When to seek medication cure to take 	Yes/No
5	Are you educated patient about the role of each medication?		Yes/No
6	Are you explaining about the side effect and adverse drug reaction to the particular use of drug		Yes/No
7	Are you asking the patient about medication other than the asthma medication?		Yes/No
8	Have you educated the patient about the proper techniques of inhaled medication?		Yes/No

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