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Patterns of prescribing practices in Prince Sattam Bin Abdelaziz University hospital, Saudi Arabia

Irrational prescribing is widespread across the world and is a major problem in many healthcare facilities, especially in developing countries. World Health Organization (WHO) declared that more than half of all drugs are prescribed, dispensed or sold improperly across the globe. Many studies achieved in different countries have documented various forms of irrational prescribing. The study objective was to determine patterns of prescribing practices in Prince Sattam Bin Abdelaziz University. The study was a cross-sectional survey divided into two parts: A retrospective prescription survey and a questionnaire for Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey. In the prescription survey, 725 patient encounters were sampled from outpatient and inpatient departments between 1st January and 31st July, 2014. SPSS version 17 was used for all statistical analyses. The knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) survey involved administering questionnaires to 51 prescribers. The number of drugs per patient encounter was 3.8. Only 23% of the total drugs were prescribed using international non-proprietary names (generic names). Antibiotics were prescribed for about 62% while injections were prescribed in 12.8% of the total prescriptions surveyed. The percentage of complete prescriptions was 41%. Clinical setting, comorbidities, chronic conditions and prescriber team were all found to be significantly associated with both polypharmacy (12.5%) and antibiotic prescription. Polypharmacy means more than 5 drugs prescribed. Polypharmacy was evident in acute cases 90%. The number of drugs prescribed was positively correlated to patient age. The KAP survey revealed gaps in prescriber's knowledge regarding prescribing guidelines. The results show a trend towards inappropriate prescribing, particularly underuse of generic names when prescribing, over prescription of antibiotics, polypharmacy and incomplete prescription writing. To address irrational prescribing in the hospital, frequent Continuous Medical Education Forums (CMEs), seminars and trainings on prescribing are recommended. Also, periodic prescription surveys and drug utilization studies are endorsed to identify any forms of irrational prescribing.

Biography

Mohamed Abd Elaziz has completed his PhD in Clinical Pharmacology from Mansoura University, Faculty of Medicine, Egypt. He is currently working at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. He is the Head of Clinical Pharmacy Department, College of Pharmacy. He has published more than 50 papers in reputed journals and is also serving as an Editorial Board Member of 4 reputed journals.

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