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Effective risk management: Case of supply chain of essential medicines in Zambia

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Access to health care is a human right, which includes having timely access to affordable and quality essential medicines at the right place and in sufficient quantity. However, inefficient public sector supply chain management contributes to constant shortages of essential medicines at health facilities. Literature review involved a desktop study of published research studies and reports on risk management, supply chain management of essential medicines and their integration to increase the efficiency of the latter. The research was conducted on a sample population of offices under Ministry of Health Headquarters, Lusaka Provincial and District Offices, selected health facilities in Lusaka, Medical Stores Limited, Zambia Medicines Regulatory Authority and Cooperating Partners. Individuals involved in study were selected judgmentally by their functions under selection and quantification, regulation, procurement, storage, distribution, quality assurance and dispensing of essential medicines. Structured interviews and discussions were held with selected experts and self-administered questionnaires were distributed. Collected and analyzed data of 35 returned and usable questionnaires from the 50 distributed. The highest prioritized risks were; inadequate and inconsistent fund disbursements, weak information management systems, weak quality management systems and insufficient resources (HR and infrastructure) among others. The results for this research can be used to increase the efficiency of the public sector supply chain of essential medicines and other pharmaceuticals. The results of the study showed that there is need to implement effective risk management systems by participating institutions and organisations to increase the efficiency of the entire supply chain in order to avoid and/or reduce shortages of essential medicines at health facilities.

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Adolescent knowledge and awareness of diabetes mellitus in Kuwait

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Background & Aim: Diabetes mellitus is a major public health problem in Kuwait. This study aimed to evaluate the awareness and the knowledge of diabetes in adolescent about the disease which, will be of a great help to reduce the risk of developing diabetes and its complications.

Methodology: Across-sectional survey was done to evaluate the general knowledge of diabetes. The survey was introduced randomly to the students of 30 secondary public and private schools in Kuwait. The questionnaire was divided into eight main sections, with each section focusing on different aspects of diabetes mellitus, namely, General knowledge about diabetes, Knowledge of risk factors of diabetes, Knowledge of symptoms, Knowledge on complications, Knowledge about treatment and available medications, Knowledge about lifestyle and non-medical measures, Things diabetics should not do, and Knowledge of management of diabetes.

Results: A total of 4333 students contributed. The mean total knowledge score was 25.0 (SD=7.1) out of 37 and the average correct answer was 63.2%, ranges from 33.3% to 87.1%. The average correct answer for different sections were highest for monitoring section (71%) followed by general knowledge section (69.8%) and the lowest for symptoms and complications section (55.5%). The percentage correct response to 18 questions was below the overall average. Only one third of students knew that pregnant women may become diabetic through pregnancy. Also, only about half of the participants knew that diabetes can result in weight loss, impaired vision and delay in wound healing.

Conclusion: The students contributed in this study have good general information about diabetes except for a few areas. Our study will clarify these areas to help in designing educational programs to treat these deficiencies of knowledge about the disease and increase the awareness.

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