

# European Pharma Congress

August 25-27, 2015 Valencia, Spain

## Perception and attitude of physicians toward local generic medicines in KSA: A questionnaire-based study

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The local market of generic medicine share in KSA is low compared to global and regional statistics. The reason for this low market share and the role of physicians has not previously been investigated. The aim of this study was to assess health practitioners' level of perceived knowledge and attitudes about local generic medication and identify factors that influence infrequency of generic prescriptions. A random sample of 231 physicians was recruited from two hospitals in Riyadh; the response rate was 77%. Among the 178 physicians, 76% and 47% reported that they are knowledgeable about the terms "generic" and "bioequivalence" respectively, while 44% reported that they are able to explain bioequivalence to their patients. Around 52% of physicians reported that local generics should be substituted for brands if suitable for the case, and 21.9% reported that they believe SFDA approved local generics are therapeutically equivalent to their brands. Clinical effectiveness was reported by 71.9% of physicians as the most influential factor effecting prescription of brand over local generic medication. The 3 independent significant predictors for infrequent prescription of local generics were: government sector employment OR: 3.74 [95%CI 1.50–9.43], consultant level OR: 3.94 [95%CI 1.50–10.31] and low level of knowledge about local generics OR: 4.11[95%CI 1.56–10.84]. The low market share of local generics medicines attributed to low prescription rates is significantly more among senior-level physicians working in governmental hospitals. Low level of knowledge about generic drugs among physicians was the strongest predictive factor for low prescription. Future studies are needed to confirm these results.

### Biography

Ashraf El Metwally is a medical doctor with a PhD in Epidemiology and Biostatistics (University of Tampere, Finland). He joined the college of Public health and Health Informatics in August 2001, while holding an honorary lecturer position at the department of public health- University of Aberdeen in the UK. His research interests are in the epidemiology of pain, musculoskeletal disorders and rheumatic diseases, with 15 published research papers and reports in international peer-reviewed journals. His international awards include the Young Investigator Award from the British Society of Rheumatology (2006), first prize for the best submitted paper and presentation from the british pain society (2007).

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