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Effect of an Educational Intervention to Improve Safety Culture Among Pharmacists: A Study at a Teaching Hospital, Sri Lanka

Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Multidisciplinary Approaches (ICMA) 2019 | Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Posted: 6 Dec 2019

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Date Written: December 4, 2019

Abstract

Safety culture is how safety is considered by employees and the availability of systems to promote safety in an organization. It is essential to ensure that medication dispensing takes place in an environment with optimum safety culture since it is a vital step in the treatment process. The objective of the present study was to assess the effectiveness of an educational intervention to improve safety culture, as perceived by pharmacists involved in the dispensing process of a selected teaching hospital in Sri Lanka. This was an interventional, cross-sectional study conducted between January 2018 and May 2018. An interviewer-administered questionnaire, developed in-house, based on published literature (and content validated), was administered to all dispensing pharmacists (N=19). Two weeks later, participants attended an educational workshop on safety culture as the intervention. In addition, an educational poster developed at the workshop by pharmacists themselves was displayed in the working pharmacy, and a study pack on safety culture (based on the workshop content) was given to each participant. The same questionnaire was repeated one month after the workshop. Safety culture was assessed in terms of six domains (environmental factors, human factors, communication, supervision, documentation and reactions to mistakes). The Mean Composite Scores (MCSs) were calculated for each domain before and after the study for comparison. There was no statistically significant difference ($p>0.05$) between the before and after MCSs of any domain. However, results indicated an improving trend in knowledge of safety culture among pharmacists as the total number of “Don’t know” responses had reduced from 25 to 11. The present study implies that educational interventions alone have little effect in enhancing a safety culture in the dispensing process.

Keywords: safety culture, dispensing process, pharmacists, pharmacy, educational intervention

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