Title: Appropriateness of dispensing practices of medicines to inmates in elderly care homes – evidence from a cohort of sri lanka

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Abstract:
Methods
A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in selected elderly care homes in the Colombo district. Inmates with chronic non communicable disease were recruited. A detailed medication history was obtained from each participant (or caregiver) using a pre-tested data collection form. Prescriptions were cross checked against the respective medication labels to identify any dispensing errors. The name, dosage form, strength, dose, frequency, duration, total quantity of units dispensed and special instructions were assessed for accuracy and completeness.
Results
Hundred inmates in nine elderly care homes were selected. Mean age of inmates was 70 +/- 10.5 years and most were women (72%). Median dispensing errors per patient was 18.0 +/- 16.2. It accounted to 4.6 dispensing errors for every medicine dispensed. Ninety five percent of inmates had at least one dispensing error. Absence of information on duration of medicines was the highest rated problem (3.2 +/- 2.4), followed by lack of provision of medicine specific special instructions (3.0 +/- 2.2). Medicine name was missing in 67% of medicine labels. More than 75% of medicine labels contained only dose and frequency.