

PP 77

Attitudes, practice and perceived barriers on pharmaceutical care among state pharmacists in Northern Province, Sri Lanka

Darshika TGU^{1*}, Surenthirakumaran R², Thuvaragan S¹

¹Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka, ²Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Background: Pharmaceutical care can be defined as “responsible provision of drug therapy for achieving definite outcomes that improves patient’s quality of life”.

Objective: The objective of this study was to assess attitudes and practices, to describe the perceived barriers to implement pharmaceutical care, and to assess the association between socio-demographic and work related factors on attitudes and practices among state pharmacists in the Northern Province, Sri Lanka.

Method: It was a descriptive cross-sectional study conducted using a pre-tested and validated self-administered questionnaire from 24th July to 24th October 2020. The questionnaire included a five point-Likert scale. All state pharmacists who worked in the Northern Province during the study period were included. Pre-determined cut-off values for attitudes and practices were decided with the help of supervisors and experts. Cut off values for attitudes and practices were 70% and 60% respectively. Chi-square and Fisher’s test were used to assess associations between variables.

Results: Of 114 state pharmacists, 92.9% (n=106) responded to the study. Sixty-seven percent (n=71) of participants had positive attitudes, and 57.5% (n=61) of them had good practices on pharmaceutical care. Identified perceived barriers for provision of pharmaceutical care by most pharmacists were insufficient staff, lack of infrastructure, lack of privacy, high work load, lack of higher studies in the pharmacy field, and low patient literacy. Age (p=0.005) and work experience (p=0.001) had significant association with attitudes. Age (p=0.013), work experience (p=0.044) and number of pharmacists (p=0.046) had significant association with practice. Participants with age ≤30 years, experience ≤5 years had positive attitudes and age ≤30 years, experience ≥20 years, and number of pharmacists ≤ 2 had good practice.

Conclusion: More than half of the pharmacists had positive attitudes and good practice on pharmaceutical care. Pharmaceutical care services by pharmacists could be further improved by implementing continuous professional development programmes and providing solutions for identified barriers.