

Understanding of the medical prescription among the attendants of the pediatric patients attending outpatient department (Government Wenlock Hospital) mangalore

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Introduction

Outpatient care is any health care service provided to a patient who is not admitted to a health facility, which is often supplemented by medications administered at home. pediatric patients are exposed to up to 3 times the rate of potentially dangerous medication errors compared to their adult counterparts. The reasons for poor compliance are mainly discontinuation of treatment, say, when the patient felt better or when the immediate expected results of therapy did not appear. either of the reasons is based on deliberate action, misinterpretation or inadequate information. We conducted this study to assess the level of understanding of the prescriptions among the attendants' of the pediatric patients at the outpatient department of Government Wenlock Hospital and also identify reasons for misunderstanding, as understanding the prescription completely is of prime importance for therapeutic response. This would help in suggesting remedial measures to improve the understanding of the prescriptions and the patient compliance.

Materials and Methods

This was a pre tested questionnaire based survey among the attendants' of the pediatric patients attending at the outpatient department of Government Wenlock Hospital, mangalore. A total of 862 attendants' of the pediatric patient's were selected as assuming the level of understanding of medical prescription as 50% with

7% relative precision and alpha set at 5% (confidence interval - 95%) to be 784. After adding 10% non-response rate, the final sample size is 862. Data was analyzed using SPSS (11.5). Chi square test was used for the statistical analysis and p value <0.05 was considered significant.

Results

This study shows that (90.8%) of the prescriptions were explained by consultants. (100%) approach of doctor completely satisfactory. (81.7%) upper lower socioeconomic class according to modified Kuppuswamy classification. The prescription details were very well explained except for storage of medication and possible adverse effects. (78.1% and 91.3%) were not informed of the above respectively. (26.9%) unable to read the prescription due to illegibility. (28%) had difficulty in identifying the drugs. (1.7%) misunderstood a few directions. (78.1% and 91.3%) couldn't understand about storage of medication and possible adverse effects. (98.3%) understood about dosage and interval. (74.4%) were able to recall dosage, interval, route of administration and duration.

Conclusion

Majority of the attendants were able to understand the medical prescription after being explained by the health care worker and some misunderstood due to illegibility and language problem. Despite explanation, attendants had difficulty in identification of drugs. But the concepts of storage of medication and possible adverse effects were not explained properly. There is difference in understanding the prescription among different educational strata and socio economic levels.