

A study of community pharmacists awareness of and contributions to, the ADR reporting systems in the holy city of Makkah

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Aim: To determine and evaluate awareness, of the training and attitude of community pharmacists towards adverse drug reactions (ADRs) reported in the Holy City of Makkah in Saudi Arabia.

Method: Face to face interviews were carried out on 170 community pharmacists. Ethical approval has given by the Makkah MOH randomly selected from a membership list from the Ministry of Health (MOH) in the Holy City of Makkah.

Results: The pharmacists interviewed were employed in small, medium and large private pharmaceutical establishments, with over the counter retail facilities. From the data collected found the majority of community pharmacists 76% (n=129) were Continuing education 1-5 hours per month. However, 86 % (n=146) were not aware of the ADR reporting program in the Holy City of Makkah. Similarly, 56% (n=95) of the respondents were not aware of the existence of the Saudi National Pharmacovigilance centre (NPC) within the Saudi Food and Drug authority (SFDA) and they were also unaware of the system of reporting ADRs through the appropriate channel and filling in the forms to report them. 88% (n=150) of community pharmacists in the Holy City of Makkah did not use one of fundamental tools of ADR reporting which was accessing and using the internet in their workplace. The majority of community pharmacists in the Holy City of Makkah commented on which department they considered was responsible for receiving and interpreting ADR reporting; 65% (n=110) stated that it was the MOH. 65% (n=110) of respondents considered the reporting of ADRs to be integral to this professional role as a pharmacist. Importantly, all community pharmacists decided to report ADRs in the future after the researcher explained to them the importance doing so. The main factors that discouraged ADR reporting were the lack of reporting forms being available, that it was time consuming, that they did not know how to report them and some commented on their indifference to the system.

Conclusions: The Community pharmacists could play an important role in ensuring the use of safe medications in patients. To achieve this aim they clearly require more education and training of knowledge about the importance of reporting ADRs through appropriate training courses.

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