Adv Pharmacoepidemiol Drug Saf 2017, 6:3 (Suppl) DOI: 10.4172/2167-1052-C1-003

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11th International Conference on

PHARMACOEPIDEMIOLOGY AND CLINICAL RESEARCH

October 02-03, 2017 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Effect of structured patient education program on the knowledge level of mothers with gastroenteritis and *pneumonia* in children in Atfal El Raml Hospital

Reem Tawfeek, Nermine Abass, Manal Abd El Aziz, Noha Hal, Reem Gamal, Esraa Abd-El Latif, Mai Koraiem, Hebabarakat, Radwa Magdy, Hala Zahran and Radwa Hamza

Pharmacist, Clinical Pharmacy Department, El-Raml Pediatric Hospital, Egypt

Pneumonia and gastroenteritis are two widely spread diseases among children with negative clinical consequences and enormous economic burden. In developing countries, they are known to be the major causes of morbidity in children especially those less than five years. Identification of pneumonia/gastroenteritis aspects and major risk factors is a significant lifesaving factor. Mother's education is of great impact on children's health as it is thought to minimize complications of both diseases by increasing the mother's level of knowledge about the disease nature and management. Thus, this study developed in order to evaluate the effectiveness of structured education program on the knowledge level of mothers regarding childhood gastroenteritis and pneumonia which in turn can reduce the incidence of the diseases and the rate of hospitalization. A quasi experimental study which included control and intervention groups was conducted at El-Raml Pediatric Hospital in Alexandria. First a pilot study was conducted for 2 weeks before starting the main study to identify the deficient knowledge points and make any modification on the data collection tool. Then data were collected from the intervention group using pre- and post-questionnaire sheets before and after delivering structured educational session. For the control group, preand post-questionnaire were done without delivering the educational lecture. First phase study results revealed that the mothers' knowledge level concerning childhood pneumonia and gastroenteritis was quite limited and inexact especially for pneumonia. After implementation of the educational program in the second phase, a significant knowledge improvement was accomplished in the two intervention groups, also significant differences were found in knowledge levels between the intervention and the control groups in pneumonia score mean with 70% increase and in gastroenteritis score mean with 55% increase from the control groups scores mean. Finally, we can conclude that health education is a cornerstone in management and prevention of gastroenteritis and pneumonia is an effective tool to make a significant difference in the mother's knowledge and attitude. Training and empowering providers working in pediatrics outpatient clinics with skills for delivering adequate health education message targeting knowledge needs of management and prevention of both diseases is highly recommended.

reemtawfeek@hotmail.com