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Role of consumers in the patient's safety profile of pharmacovigilance program

Atul Jain

U.P.R.I.M.S & R. Saifai-Etawah, India

Despite the progress in pharmacovigilance, the burden of Public health of ADRs remains significant. Governments in most of the countries pay considerable amount from their health budget towards covering cost associated with them. Safety profile of medicines is directly linked with socio-political, economic, cultural factors which in turn affect access to medicines, their utilization patterns and public perceptions of them. Use of parenteral route, self medication and lack of regulatory control measures over the sale of Drugs increases the risk of adverse reactions. Pharmacovigilance programmes could learn from social mobilization that has been used in injection safety programmes during immunization.

Social Mobilization includes the three pronged approach of

1. Increasing public awareness through information & Education
2. Ensuring advocacy for decision makers
3. Sensitization of health works

This encourages a consumer based demand for safe medicines from a public that is informed about the safety profile of the medicines that they use.

Partnership with Patients

Pharmacovigilance is an essential part of the public programmes that underpin the availability of safer and more effective medicine. For this to be achieved it is necessary for information about drug safety programmes to be easily available to the public so that the central role of the patient in the rational and safe use of medicines is understood. The public has in recent years influenced prescribing and pattern of drug use. Drug promotion by unscientific & non reliable information to public through advertisement leads to self medication and patient demand can cause over prescription by doctors. The real cost, time, skills and human resources necessary to communicate drug safety issues proactively to the media, the public and health professionals need to be carefully considered. Such planning and resources need to be given a higher priority than in the past.

Biography

Atul Jain has done MD (Pharmacology) from MAMC, NEW DELHI in 1990. He had been on GOI deputation to B.P.Koirala Institute of Health Sciences, Dharan, Nepal as Asst. Prof. where integrated partial problem based community oriented teaching is practiced. At present he is working as Prof. & HOD Pharmacology, U.P.R.I.M.S & R. Saifai-Etawah. His area of research is rational use of Drugs, Antibiotic guidelines, Therapeutic Drug Monitoring.

drjainatul1@gmail.com