**Community Pharmacists in the State of Qatar: A Survey of their Smoking Cessation Knowledge and Educational Interests**

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**Background:** Cigarette smoking is one of the preventable causes of ill health in Qatar. Qatar community pharmacists are in an ideal position to play an important role in smoking cessation. This role necessitates adequate smoking cessation knowledge and education. The study objectives were to assess Qatar community pharmacists’ smoking cessation knowledge and to gauge their perceptions of which aspects of smoking-related education would be most interesting.

**Methods:** A pretested survey was used to solicit community pharmacists’ anonymous responses. The survey was designed after reviewing relevant smoking cessation literature. A phone call was made to all community pharmacists in Qatar to request their participation. Interested pharmacists were sent the survey link by email or by fax. Data was descriptively analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences software version 18.

**Results:** Over 20 weeks, we collected 112 surveys (35% response rate). Smoking cessation knowledge was evaluated using 8 true or false questions. Thirty seven percent of respondents scored less than 60% and 13% scored more than 80%. The mean score was 61% with a standard deviation of 17%. Eighty-nine percent of respondents indicated that they have not received before any smoking cessation education. Nevertheless, at least 70% indicated that they were interested in receiving additional smoking cessation education. Respondents were mostly interested in receiving education on motivating smokers to quit and on counseling on behavioral techniques (89% and 86% respectively). Sixty nine percent indicated a preference for mailings of printed materials as method of information delivery.

**Conclusion:** Despite their low smoking cessation knowledge, Qatar community pharmacists are interested in receiving additional smoking cessation education. A smoking cessation education program should be offered to these pharmacists to give them the knowledge they need to be competent smoking cessation counselors.

**Pharmacy Students’ Attitudes Toward Pharmaceutical Care in Qatar**

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**Background:** Pharmacy practice has recently shifted from medication supply to pharmaceutical care (PC). Pharmacy educators must prepare students to provide PC. Their responsibilities are not only limited to give students knowledge and communication skills but to motivate them to perform PC. The study objectives were to investigate Qatar pharmacy students’ attitudes toward PC, to identify the factors that influence their attitudes toward PC, and to recognize their perceived barriers for PC provision.

**Method:** Qatar University college of pharmacy is the only pharmacy college in Qatar. A cross sectional survey of Qatar University pharmacy students was made. The students completed an online anonymous survey designed based on Standard Pharmaceutical Care Attitudes Survey (PCAS). Data was descriptively analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 18. Influence of sociodemographic characteristics on students’ attitudes was assessed using Kendall’s tau-b test.

**Result:** Over 4 weeks, 46 surveys were submitted (90% response rate). All respondents agreed that PC practice is valuable and that the pharmacist primary responsibility is to prevent and resolve medication therapy problems. Most respondents believed that PC provision is professionally rewarding (96% of respondents), and that all pharmacists should provide PC (91%). Highly perceived barriers for PC provision included lack of access to patient medical information (76% of respondents), inadequate drug information sources in the pharmacy (53%) and time constraints (53%). Professional year and practical experience duration were significantly inversely associated with students attitudes (correlation coefficients are -0.30 and -0.37 respectively, p<0.05). No statistically significant correlations existed between other characteristics and students attitudes.

**Conclusion:** Qatar pharmacy students indicated positive attitudes toward PC. However, they perceived several barriers for PC provision. Efforts should be exerted by Qatar’s government to help these future pharmacists in overcoming these barriers.