

Practice of medication storage and disposal among patients with chronic medications in Sibu Hospital

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The objective of this study was to explore the practice of medication storage and disposal among patients with chronic medications in Sibu Hospital. **Methods:** A 3-month cross-sectional study was conducted among patients taking chronic medications in Sibu Hospital, Sarawak. Convenience sampling method was applied, and data was collected via a face-to-face interview by using a set of questions constructed based on several resources. **Results:** A total of 444 respondents were recruited in our study. The findings showed that majority of the respondents have improper practice of medication storage (n=343, 77.3%) and disposal (n=434, 97.7%). There were significant differences between respondents with formal education and no formal education with regard to improper chronic medication storage practice (86.5% versus 73.6%, $p=0.03$). In addition, practice of chronic medication storage was also significantly associated with the ethnicity (Bumiputera 79.9% versus non-Bumiputera 71.3%, $p=0.048$) and monthly household income (\leq RM3000 78.3% versus $>$ RM3000 62.1%, $p=0.044$). However, there was no significant association between sociodemographic characteristics and chronic medication disposal practice. **Conclusion:** From the results, we conclude that the awareness on storage and disposal of medicine in the home was less among respondents. Healthcare providers, particularly pharmacists should play an active role as the most trusted source of knowledge about medication storage and disposal methods. Government should serve a critical role in this aspect by ratification of regulations and expanding knowledge of the public by organizing education campaigns and awareness programmes.