

Assessment of Pharmacist-Operated Drug & Poison Information Service at Tertiary Care Hospital, Pakistan

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Background: The increased accessibility of new drug products and constant scientific growth demands a timely response in terms of the drug & poison information center (DPIC) for the provision of optimal patient care. First DPIC in Pakistan was established at Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi in 1995 while still, we have a few numbers of DPICs (Khaliq, & Sayed, 2016). The pharmacy department at Shifa international hospital (SIH), Islamabad started drug information service with the main objective to provide accurate, unbiased and up-to-date information on medications.

Aim of the study: To evaluate the pharmacist lead drug information services operated by the department of pharmacy at SIH, Islamabad.

Methodology: A retrospective observational study has been designed. Study setting was Department of clinical pharmacy at Shifa International, Hospital, Islamabad. All queries from 2016-2019 were retrieved from SIH, DPIC database. The variables obtained for analysis were type of drug queries and type of callers. Data were analyzed by SPSS version 20.0 using descriptive statistics and chi-square test for categorical variables considering p-value < 0.05 significant

Results: During the period of evaluation, a total of 6870 drug queries were recorded with a 2.93 times increase in 2019. Comparatively less calls were received by physicians and pharmacist outside SIH (1.9% and 0.3%). An overall reduction in queries from pharmacists at SIH was observed (38.3% in 2016 to 24.6% in 2019) owing to the continuous education of pharmacy staff and availability of drug information resources (books, apps & online software) at their work places.

Conclusion: The overall number of queries responded by the DPIC significantly increased in 2019 in comparison to 2016. The rise has been consistent among queries received from physicians and general public and indicates that DPICs can offer drug consultation for both. However, more efforts are still needed to encourage the utilization of services provided by DPIC.