

## **Why Physicians are not Willing to Prescribe by INN? A Qualitative Insight of Public Sector Hospital**

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**Background:** Prescribing a drug is critical job. In this era of increased health care cost most of the countries favor INN prescribing and/or generic prescribing to control the pharmaceutical expenditure. In Pakistan, generic prescribing is very low i.e. 35% which is even worse than Bangladesh (78%) and Indonesia (59%). This raises an important question that why there is a hesitancy to prescribe drugs by INN name in Pakistan.

**Objective:** To explore the benefits and barriers of INN prescribing. To identify the motives of prescribers regarding the introduction of INN prescribing policy in public sector hospital, Karachi. To find out how many prescribers take price into consideration when prescribing drugs.

**Methodology:** It was a single center study. A Qualitative methodology was used to conduct a study. A purposive sampling was done. The target population for the interview process were Associate Professors and HOD of Internal medicine, Orthopedic and pediatric department at Civil Hospital, Karachi. A semi-structured interview guide was used as a study tool for the interview process. One to one interviews were done under the point of thematic saturation. The physician opinion, experiences, and ideas were understood through an interview process. The interview was audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. NVivo software was used for thematic content analysis.

**Results:** Total eleven physicians were interviewed (M=08, F=03) from internal medicine, pediatric and orthopedic ward. Seven major themes were identified namely positive impact of INN prescribing (benefits); negative impact of INN prescribing (barriers); suggestions to overcome those barriers; factors influencing for choice of medicine; beliefs about the impact of price on quality of drug; criteria to evaluate the efficacy between innovator and generics or multinational and local drugs and motives for introduction of policies regarding INN prescribing at public sector hospital.

**Conclusion:** The study highlighted the mixed attitude and perception towards INN prescribing. Introduction of generic medicine prescribing policy in a public sector hospital will be the opportunity for pharmacists to do the generic substitution but the assurance of quality and efficacy of those available alternatives will be a challenge for higher authorities.