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Improving community pharmacists practices on antibiotic dispensing process

Maria Teresa Herdeiro

University of Aveiro, Portugal

Abstract

Some studies identified self-medication and antibiotic dispensing without prescription as a link in the chain of antibiotic resistances, an important public health issue. It is essential to identify pharmacists' attitudes about antibiotic resistances and antibiotic dispensing process to develop tailored interventions.

It was conducted a study in the Centre Regional Health Administration (ARS-C), Portugal, to identify pharmacists attitudes relating to microbial resistances and antibiotic use.

Pharmacists' attitudes were identified through a questionnaire application. Questionnaire was developed based on focus groups, was evaluated by an expert panel and validated through a pilot-study conducted outside intervention area. Questionnaire was sent to 1197 pharmacists working in ARS-C, with a pre-paid and pre-filled response envelope.

Response rate was near 65%. Were identified 3 attitudes that could influence propensity of dispensing antibiotics without prescription: complacence (highest *odds ratio*), responsibility of others (attributed to patients/health system) and fear/precaution. Considering attitudes underlying antibiotics misuse was designed an educational intervention that includes: 1.Interactive Educational PowerPoint presentation (IEP); 2.printed educational materials (reminders and posters); 3.selected articles referenced during IEP. IEP comprises: a. introduction to antibiotic resistance and the problem of antibiotics misuse; b. presentation of attitudes identified, underlying antibiotic dispensing behavior; c. strategies to improve antibiotic use. It is focused to improve communication skills between pharmacists and patients, promoting therapeutic adherence, diminishing inappropriate use of antibiotics.

Results allow understanding pharmacists´ attitudes that might influence antibiotic dispensing process and design tailored interventions to improve antibiotic use, to be more accepted by pharmacists and improve pharmacists' practices.

teresaherdeiro@ua.pt