

Knowledge-Attitude-Practice Survey Regarding High Alert Medication in a Teaching Hospital in Eastern India

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Abstract : Objective: Medication errors are a reality in all settings where medicines are prescribed, dispensed and used. High Alert Medications (HAM) are those that bear a heightened risk of causing significant patient harm when used in error. We conducted a knowledge-attitude-practice survey, among residents working in a teaching hospital, to assess the ground situation with regard to the handling of HAM. Methods: We plan to approach 242 residents among the approximately 600 currently working in the hospital through purposive sampling. Residents in all disciplines (clinical, paraclinical and preclinical) are being targeted. A structured questionnaire that has been pretested on 5 volunteer residents is being used for data collection. The questionnaire is being administered to residents individually through face-to-face interview, by two raters, while they are on duty but not during rush hours. Results: Of the 156 residents approached so far, data from 140 have been analyzed, the rest having refused participation. Although background knowledge exists for the majority of respondents, awareness levels regarding HAM are moderate, and attitude is non-uniform. The number of respondents correctly able to identify most (> 80%) HAM in three common settings- accident and emergency, obstetrics and intensive care unit are less than 70%. Several potential errors in practice have been identified. The study is ongoing. Conclusions: Situation requires corrective action. There is an urgent need for improving awareness regarding HAM for the sake of patient safety. The pharmacology department can take the lead in designing awareness campaign with support from the hospital administration.

Keywords : high alert medication, medication error, questionnaire, resident

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