



## Adherence to the World Health Organization's Patient Care Indicators in Outpatient Department Dispensing at a Tertiary Care Hospital: A Cross-Sectional Observational Study

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### Abstract

The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed good dispensing practices (GDPs) to standardize the performance of pharmacists. Hence, they can be used as indicators to assess the quality of dispensing services. Evaluating the quality of dispensing is pivotal in improving dispensing practices in a healthcare institute. The objective of this study was to assess the adherence of outpatient department (OPD) pharmacists to WHO's patient care indicators. This was a cross-sectional, observational study conducted at the OPD pharmacy of the Teaching Hospital, Jaffna. Ethical approval was obtained from the ethics review committee, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Peradeniya. Eight pharmacists named A to G in the OPD were evaluated using a checklist by a single observer for about 10 dispensing cycles assessing average dispensing time, percentage of patients' knowledge of correct dosage, percentage of drugs adequately labelled, and percentage of drugs dispensed resulting in the observation of 78 dispensing cycles. Patient knowledge was assessed using a structured questionnaire administered post-dispensation. These assessments were carried out in the real dispensing environment at the OPD, and the results were influenced by multiple factors in the dispensing environment. The average dispensing time was 41.8 sec. Pharmacist A showed the highest dispensing time (55.7 sec) and pharmacist E showed the lowest dispensing time (31.0 sec). The percentage of drug knowledge among the patients varied between 50.0% to 65.0%. All the pharmacists

adequately labelled the drugs during the dispensation except pharmacist A (68.9%). Pharmacists B and C dispensed 100.0% of prescribed drugs. While adherence to certain WHO patient care indicators such as drug labelling and dispensing percentages were satisfactory, the average dispensing time and patient knowledge were below WHO recommended standards.

**Keywords:** WHO patient care indicators; Dispensing time; Dispensing cycle; Quality of dispensing