

## **OP 23 - Counselling Patterns of Community Pharmacies when Dispensing Antibiotics**

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**Background:** Antibiotic resistance has been identified as a significant health issue across the world. Inappropriate antibiotics prescribing by physicians, dispensing antibiotics without prescription and counseling by pharmacists and the misuse of antibiotics by patients make many populations “sick populations”. It is recognized that community pharmacists have a major responsibility to counsel the patients before dispensing antibiotics.

**Objectives:** The aim of this study was to investigate counseling patterns of community pharmacies when dispensing antibiotics and to examine whether the community pharmacists demand a prescription when dispensing antibiotics in Galle.

**Methodology:** This was a simulated patient study involving community pharmacists/ pharmacy assistance who work in community pharmacies in Galle AGA division. Scenarios of specific product request (Erythromycin tablets, Ciprofloxacin tablets, Amoxicillin syrup) were presented by a simulated patient. Data was recorded by the simulated patient after purchase of each product.

**Results and conclusions:** Most of the pharmacists/ pharmacy assistance (72.0%) didn't demand a prescription for antibiotic dispensing. About 82.0% of the pharmacies visited had dispensed antibiotics without a prescription. Only 14% community pharmacies in the area have been taken the medical and life style history of simulated patients. Advice or counseling regarding antibiotics were given by only 24.0% of community pharmacies . The side effects of the antibiotics were not explained to the patient by almost all the the pharmacists/ pharmacy assistance when dispensing. Counseling patterns of community pharmacies in the area were very unsatisfactory. Major issues of dispensing antibiotics such as not demanding a prescription were common, and these issues needed to be addressed by health aothorities and policy makers to safeguard the patients.

**Keywords:** Antibiotics, counseling, dispensing, pharmacy