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WORKLOAD OF STAFFS IN OUT-
PATIENT PHARMACY DEPARTMENT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	v
ABSTRACT	vi
CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW	2
2.1 Workload Pressure and Pharmacy Workforce	2
2.2 Pharmacists' Workload "Frustrating"	2
2.3 Identification by Observation of Clinical Pharmacists'	
Activities in a Hospital In-patient Setting	3
2.4 Pharmacy Staffing, Workload, and Productivity in Community Hospitals	3
CHAPTER 3 : AIM AND OBJECTIVES	4
CHAPTER 4 : MATERIALS AND METHODS	5
CHAPTER 5 : RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	6 -15
CHAPTER 6 : CONCLUSION	16
REFERENCES	17
APPENDIXES A : Research Proposal Form	
APPENDIXES B : Questionnaire	
APPENDIXES C : Permission Letter From Head of Pharmacy Department	

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to identify the workload of staffs in out-patient pharmacy. From 46 staffs in this department, 42 of them are involved in the research to discover the problems. We used questionnaires which generated from various journals to solicit responses from participating respondents. The possibilities exists that not all questions and terms used in the questionnaires were interpreted the same way by each respondent, leading to possible misclassification bias. In order to make the questionnaires efficient and reduce respondent burden, we did a pilot study to 4 respondents to make sure of their understanding of our research objectives. We can conclude that the major problems of the workload are understaffing, management policies, difficulty of taking leave/off and deficiency of medicine stocks. Besides that, the problems arise from the research are insufficient break and lack of dispensing counter. This research also highlights the importance of costs related to high workloads such as loss of goodwill, errors and absence. The goal of the research is to help the pharmacy management to overcome the problems from time to time, in order to increase the quality of pharmacy services. We also examined resultant data to determine how of these workloads can be solved. These findings may be useful to the pharmacy management to take action on the workloads which being mentioned above.

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

From Wikipedia webpage, it states that workload is the hypothetical relationship between a groups or individual human operator and task demands. From The Free Dictionary webpage, workload is the amount of work assigned to or expected from a worker in a specified time period. Workload is one of the problems faced by the staffs in out-patient pharmacy. Workload can lead to decreasing of their performance and quality in work. Therefore, this problem should being taken seriously by the pharmacy management and should not being close eyed on it.

Our research mainly focus on all staffs of out-patient pharmacy, among them are pharmacists, provisionally registered pharmacists (PRP), pharmacist assistants and the trainees from various institutions, which equal to 46 respondents. According to Raosoft software (sample size calculator), from 46 respondents, we have to analyze for at least 42 of them.

For usual, the process of dispensing medicines are done by the pharmacist and PRP on working day from Monday to Friday, at 7.30 pm to 5.30 pm. After that, it is continued by pharmacist assistant until 10.00 pm. On Saturday and Sunday, this process is fully done by pharmacist assistant. The filling and labeling process are done by pharmacist assistants and trainees. Trainees are only involving in filling and labeling process, also in topping up stocks. Screening of prescriptions process is done by the pharmacists only.

We began our research study by distributing our questionnaires which generated from the journal and literature. The elements from the questions are related to out-patient pharmacy only, not for the whole pharmacy department. Besides that, we did a pilot test to 4 respondents to gain their understanding of our scope and objectives of the questionnaires.

Apart from that, our scope of research is also including the elements which mentioned by out-patient pharmacy staffs themselves. The purposes of our research study for sure are not to fulfill the requirement of PHR 322 course only, but if possible, we hope that this research will be useful for pharmacy management to overcome the problem.

In the meanwhile, we also hope that our research can help the other pharmacy departments, not only in Ipoh General Hospital but all the hospital around Malaysia in order to increase their quality and performance.