

PROMOTING THE SAFE USE OF MEDICINE AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS:

Impact of Educational Intervention on Awareness and Knowledge



The Know Your Medicine programme is introduced to support the fourth component of the Malaysian National Medicines Policy which is the quality use of medicines. The main objective of this programme is to ensure that medicines are used wisely, appropriately, safely and cost-effectively for better health outcomes. Multiple strategies are used to achieve the objectives, among them are education, training and providing accurate medicine information to the consumers (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2019). A previous study reported a lack of knowledge on medicines use among the general public in Malaysia (Dawood et.al, 2019). Currently, there is limited documentation on awareness and knowledge of the safe use of medicine especially among university students.

This program aims to raise awareness and knowledge on the importance of the safe use of medicine (including supplements) and the health implications of using dangerous drugs in university students. The objective of this program is to encourage the involvement of university students to actively engage in promoting the safe use of medicines. Through this program, the dissemination of information on medicines and health issues may contribute to behavioural changes in the community.

Studies on attitudes and awareness of the safe use of medicines and the implications of inappropriate use of medicines gave mixed results (Abdullah, 2022; Jami, 2023; Lee, 2021; Obi, 2023). Educational intervention on the responsible use of medicine has been shown to be useful to the public (Guanghui, 2023). With this educational intervention programme, it is hoped that participants will be mindful of safe drug use and at the same time be advocate for change in rational drug use among their families and peers. The aim of this study is to assess the impact of educational intervention on the awareness and knowledge levels of university students on the safe use of medicines. The findings will provide valuable insights for developing targeted educational interventions to promote safe medication practices among university students.

The programme was conducted on 28 Oct 2023 in conjunction with the World Pharmacists Day celebration at Rafflesia College. The programme's objective is to provide exposure and garner interest in the awareness and knowledge of safe medicine usage for university students. Respondents participated in five booths related to the awareness and knowledge of the safe use of medicines. The booths include topics of managing your medicine, medicine adherence, medicine used in children, 5R use of medicines and adverse effects of medicine. At the end of the activities, participants were requested to answer a survey on their pre- and post-knowledge to reflect their understanding of the safe use of medicines. A total of 2512 participants responded. Generally, the participants' responses showed an increase from pre- to post-on most items of awareness and knowledge of the safe use of medicines. The details of the survey will be published in a journal later.

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