

**PERCEPTION OF PATIENTS TOWARDS COUNSELING AT
OUTPATIENT PHARMACY PPUKM**



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ABSTRACT

Non-compliance to drug therapy is a common problem worldwide. Providing effective counseling to the patients regarding their medication is an excellent mean to improve patient compliance. The present study evaluated the performance of counseling service in outpatient pharmacy Pusat Perubatan Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (PPUKM) via patient perception. The collection of data was done from 1st October 2008 to 1st January 2009. A total of 102 patients were involved to complete the questionnaire. Data was collected via a semi-structured questionnaire with face to face interview. The obtained data was analyzed by using SPSS version 15.0 and Microsoft Excell 2003.

Altogether, 102 patients completed the questionnaire from 1st October 2008 to 1st January 2009. Among them, 55.9% were female. The largest age group of the patients were age 20 – 29 (42.2%) with post secondary education level (67.6%) and most of them are working as civil servant (52%). Generally, the patients were satisfied with the counseling service (71.6%) provided by outpatient pharmacy PPUKM. Three most common problems that affect the counseling service by patient were not smiling (46.1%), do not introduce (44.1%) and do not use appropriate language (31.4%). In order to achieve effective counseling, most of the patients suggested, the pharmacy to communicate in the appropriate language (51%), greet the patients (49%) and pay attention (47.1%). This study showed that most of the respondents were satisfied with the counseling service that they received. However, using the appropriate language, improving interpersonal skills and improving the facilities i.e. the counseling room and pharmacy environment should be considered to improve the overall counseling service in outpatient pharmacy PPUKM.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Patient medication counselling is pharmacists talking with patients about medications they are intended to take in order to educate them about medication related issues and to help them to get the most benefit from their medications.¹

The need and potential for counseling the patients regarding their drug therapy has been an important part of the pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical care. It has been the responsibility of the pharmacist to counsel the patients before dispensing the medication.² Counseling not only enhances compliance, but also reduces complications due to non-compliance to treatment.³ Pharmacists are trying to move away from drug-focused approach to a patient oriented approach according to the patient's need, with the aim of achieving better outcomes from drug therapies.⁴

It has been estimated that 59% of physicians surveyed indicate that their biggest complaint about patients is their failure to follow and adhere to the doctor's prescribed treatment regimen. It is estimated that only 50% of patients take their medication as directed by their physician. 22% of Americans take less of their medication than is prescribed on the label. Among non-compliant patients the biggest reasons cited (24%) is that they simply forget. Additionally, research shown that non-compliance causes 125000 deaths annually in US. There are also estimated that 10% of hospital admissions are due to patient non-compliance. It has been suggested that counselling by pharmacists could lead to better compliance and hence less therapeutic failure and possible death.⁵

There are several features that pharmacists and dispensers can take to get effective patient counseling. The features are establishing trust, communicate verbally, communicate nonverbally, listen, ask question, remain clinical objective, show empathy, provide privacy and motivate patients.⁶

Pharmacy Department of PPUKM offers a wide range of counseling services in order to improve patients' understanding compliance towards their medication therapy. Outpatient counseling services are provided by a full-time counseling pharmacist in a counseling room which offers privacy and comfort to the patients. While at the counter,