

AB031. Medication risk communication: a cross-sectional survey among healthcare professionals in Malaysia

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Background: Effective medication risk communication is essential at every stage of the pharmacovigilance risk management process. However, this fundamental activity has never been evaluated among Malaysian healthcare professionals. We aimed to assess the awareness of doctors and pharmacists on risk communication methods in Malaysia, and identify factors predicting the usefulness of medication risk communication.

Methods: We conducted a cross-sectional, web-based survey involving doctors and pharmacists across Malaysia. The adapted questionnaire covered four risk communication methods used in Malaysia, namely Direct Healthcare Professional Communications, educational materials, safety alerts and safety bulletins. We used the Pearson χ^2 test to examine the association between awareness of risk communication methods and demographic variables. To determine factors which predicted the usefulness of risk communication, we used logistic regression analyses.

Results: Of the 1,146 responses received, 650 (56.7%) were from pharmacists. Overall, 71.5% of respondents were aware of educational materials, while awareness of the other three risk communication methods ranged from 20.7% to 53.9%. Private sector healthcare professionals were significantly more aware of Direct Healthcare Professional Communications [$\chi^2_{(1, N=237)} = 21.5, P < 0.001$] compared to those in the public sector. The significant predictors

for finding risk communication useful included being a pharmacist [odds ratio (OR) 18.2; 95% confidence interval (CI): 11.0–30.1; $P < 0.001$], having more than 30 years' work experience (OR 4.9; 95% CI: 2.0–12.1; $P < 0.001$), working in the pharmaceutical industry (OR 4.6; 95% CI: 1.1–19.7; $P = 0.039$), and having received medication safety training (OR 1.6; 95% CI: 1.2–2.2; $P = 0.004$).

Conclusions: Awareness on medication risk communication in Malaysia needs to be increased. Key suggestions to enhance risk communication usefulness are to improve public-private healthcare sector collaboration for better outreach, enlist pharmacists as contact points for dissemination, and establish regular training programmes for healthcare professionals and risk communicators.

Keywords: Pharmacovigilance; doctors; pharmacists; awareness; predictors

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Footnote

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Ethical Statement: The authors are accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

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