

Medication Teaching Activities in Community Pharmacies

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Since new prescription law of separating prescribing and dispensing functions was implemented in July 1, 2000, medication teaching activity has become the most important pharmaceutical service in community pharmacies. Although major components of medication information to be delivered to the patients are legally defined, medication teaching methods and contents have been variable depending on pharmacists' preferences.

Most medication teachings for patients are provided verbally with or without additional materials such as leaflets and audio-visual aids. Medication teaching activities by pharmacists have been evaluated by several consumer groups. Most studies have shown that over all quality of medication teachings in community pharmacies is far below the level that the public expects. There are many reasons for this outcome but major reason is deemed to be the absence of standardized guideline for medication teaching.

Therefore, a well-designed practice standard or guideline to be imposed by either professional groups or governmental agency is needed to improve the quality of medication teachings and consequently clinical outcomes of costly medications.