Quality of pharmacy services: Evaluation of patient satisfaction

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Abstract

Background:

Quality of pharmacy services are mainly ensured by strict professional regulations being part of the health care system. Up to the date, there are no tools available, which are tailored to pharmacy services and measure the quality from the stakeholder side. The SERVQAL model was therefore adapted to pharmacy services to measure the satisfaction of the patients, as the main stakeholders of pharmacy services.

Objective:

To develop and validate an instrument that can measure patient satisfaction in community pharmacies, and adapt to the Hungarian national specialities.

Method:

A SERVQUAL based questionnaire was developed and validated in order to measure patient satisfaction in community pharmacies in Hungary. A 5 grade Likert-type scale was used to evaluate the results in three different dimensions: accessibility of the pahrmacy, pharmacist's interactions and readiness, and services provided by the pharmacy. After a validation study, the opinion of 907 patients from 20 pharmacies was evaluated, representing the population from different regions of Hungary.

Results:

The tool showed to be useful for the measurement of quality of pharmacy services, however its sensitivity should be improved. Most of the patients reported high levels of satisfaction in all the three dimensions. Only one service activity resulted in significantly lower grades. This question related to the pharmacy care activity, wich is quite a new service in Hungarian Pharmacies. We also found that, the patients in Hungary insist to one pharmacy.

Conclusion:

This study was the first trial to evaluate the patient satisfaction with pharmacy services in Hungary. The results shows high level of satisfaction. Fields for improvement can be concluded for the tool and the services measured as well.