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Labeling practice and associated factors of community pharmacies at municipality areas in Jaffna and Kandy Districts

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Background: Dispensing labels on medicines provide administration and other important instructions. Proper written communication on dispensing labels could reduce medication errors.

Objective: This study assessed community pharmacies' labeling practice and associated factors at municipality areas in Jaffna and Kandy Districts in Sri Lanka.

Methods & Materials: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 121 community pharmacies in municipality areas in Jaffna and Kandy Districts in Sri Lanka using a checklist and an interviewer-administered questionnaire. The checklist was used to collect information on labeling practice, and the interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to collect information on socio-demographic factors, work-related factors and pharmacy related factors. Investigator visited community pharmacies with valid prescriptions and collected dispensing labels from pharmacy personnel. Five prescriptions for azithromycin tablets, celecoxib capsules, pantoprazole delayed released tablets, hydrocortisone ointment and ciprofloxacin eye drops were used. The total score given for labeling practice was 50. Data were analyzed by using Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 26. The association of factors on labeling practice in community pharmacies was determined by an independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA test. Significance level was set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: A total of 490 dispensing labels were collected from 98 community pharmacies. The patient's name, medicine name, dosage, frequency, the quantity of drugs, duration of treatment, specific instructions, pharmacy name/address and pharmacist name/signature were written on 8.16%, 94.08%, 73.67%, 98.57% 25.92%, 30.20%, 69.39%, 44.29% and 4.08 % of labels respectively. Number of dispensers working in the pharmacy ($p=0.046$), age of the participants ($p=0.040$), and duty satisfaction ($p=0.032$) were significantly associated with labeling practice.

Conclusion: The labeling practice on dispensed medicines was not satisfactory in the municipality areas of the Jaffna and Kandy Districts. Number of dispensers working in the pharmacy, the age of the participants, and duty satisfaction were found to be significant associated factors on labeling practice.