

PP5 Medicine information needs and sources, their accessibility and acceptability among visually disabled adults.

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Introduction

Medicine information needs and medicine information sources accessible and acceptable to visually handicapped is underexplored impeding provision of suitable medicine information to improve medicine use.

Objectives

To identify types of medicine information needed, sources utilized and their accessibility and acceptability.

Methodology

A descriptive cross sectional study on 63 visually handicapped persons was carried out at a vocational training centre and a school for the visually disabled using an interviewer administered questionnaire. All eligible subjects above 18 years of age were included in the study.

Results

The difference between trade names and the generic name of a medicine and the fact that medicines cause side effects were not known by 43% and 14% respectively.

Most accessible medicine information source was the doctor. Family/friends/teachers/caregivers were utilized more than the pharmacist to access medicine information. Radio was the most utilized electronic medium for medicine-related information. Preferred medicine information source was the doctor (90%). None named the pharmacist as the most preferred medicine information source.

Almost all participants wanted information regarding name of medicines, reason for use, dose, frequency, time of administration, duration of treatment, whether before or after meals and side effects. However the majority did not receive information expected and had difficulties in self-administration of medicines for which they needed suitable strategies.

Specific medicine information related to the medicines prescribed was provided mostly by the doctor.

All participants had easy access and could operate a radio independently. Ninety six percent had access to television. Though majority had tape recorders, none used it to record medicine information provided by the doctor or pharmacist. The majority were able to use a telephone (88%) and 95% of them were willing to use it to get medicine information if a helpline was available.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Visually disabled require specific and general medicine information regarding the medicines they use and strategies to overcome barriers in self-administration of medicines.

Since doctors and caregivers were preferred and accessible sources of information their attitudes and capabilities in this regard should be improved. It is necessary to promote utilization of pharmacists and tape recorders for this purpose.

The radio, telephone and television to which they had ready access should be utilized to provide medicine information. Awareness must be raised among visually disabled population regarding importance of access and utilization of medicine information.

PP6 Difficulties encountered in using medicines, medicine related mishaps and self-adopted coping strategies in visually disabled adults.

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Introduction

Difficulties faced by visually disabled patients in using medicines, self adopted coping strategies and medicine related mishaps are largely unknown. Thus health professionals are poorly prepared to handle medicine related needs of such patients.