

# **The quality of drug dispensing practice in public health facilities in Dar es Salaam**

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Hospital pharmacies are primarily knowledge based profession as they provide both dispensatory as well as clinical functions. The quality of drug dispensing influences adherence to prescribed drugs and therefore clinical outcomes inadequate information leading to non-compliance, treatment failure and irrational use of drugs. The findings from this research had to provide an understanding of the quality of drug dispensing in public health facilities which may be the basis for future intervention strategies to address dispensing practice. This study examined the quality of drug dispensing in public health facilities in Dar es Salaam and its implication on pharmaceutical use. A descriptive cross-section survey was carried out in dispensing staff in Ilala, Temeke, and Kinondoni Municipalities. Semi structured questionnaire were used so as to obtain data on the quality of information provision to clients on drug use and to document the behavioral pattern of the dispensing process. A set of indicators were used to assess the quality of labeling of the dispensed drugs and dispensing time were also recorded. Convenient sampling was used to select dispenser encounter and exit client for the interview. Results show that the quality of drug dispensing in public health facilities is generally poor. The dispensing is characterized by poor validation of prescriptions (50.10%), negligence in taking necessary steps to understand and interpreting prescriptions (55.2%), failure to accord to the principles that are involved during preparation for dispensing (91.1%) and poor information provided to clients during issuing of medication with proper information to the client in which 26.70% and 65.90% of the dispensing staff performed poor and very poor respectively. The overall knowledge of client on dosage regimen (13.40%) was poor. Only a very small percentage of the clients (6.7%) were informed of the appropriate time to take their medication. Information on side effects and contraindications were rarely provided. Only (1.9%) and (3%) of the clients were provided with that information respectively. Labeling of medicine was poor, (96.50%) of the labels were not according to Good dispensing practice (GDP). Almost half (54.8%) of the dispenser-patient interactions were very poor. The average dispensing time and the average dispensing time per item was found to be 88 seconds and 48 seconds respectively.

It is concluded that the quality of drug dispensing practice in public health facilities in Dar es Salaam leave much to be desired. The practices is characterized by failure of dispensing staff to follow principles of validating prescriptions according to GDP, There is also negligence in taking necessary steps to understand interpret prescriptions, and failure to abide to the principles that arc involving during preparation for dispensing. And poor information provision to clients. It is also recommended that training in GDP to address the dispensing practice is needed; State regulatory authorities should help to reinforce information provision to clients. Public education to create awareness to the right to receive clear and precisely information is needed.