

Assessment of antibiotics self-medication to under five children: caretakers' knowledge, attitude and practice: a case study of Kinondoni municipality, Dar es Salaam

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Self-medication (SM) is a major component of Self Care which refers to what people do for them to establish and maintain health, prevent and deal with illness. It is an important public health issue especially in developing countries like Tanzania. The study aimed at exploring knowledge, attitude, and practice towards antibiotics self-medication (SMA) by care givers of under five children at Kinondoni Municipality in Tanzania. The study employed a descriptive cross section study on a sample of 312 care givers with under five children. Both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used in the study. The quantitative data were collected by structured questionnaire and analysed using SPSS version 20 and the qualitative data were collected through in depth interview and analysed by thematic analysis. The respondents' knowledge regarding the appropriate of SMA was satisfactory 182 (60.3%). There was no significant relationship between knowledge and socio-demographic characteristics like education level and age. Results show also that more than half 178 (58.9%) of care givers portrayed positive attitude towards SMA and there was a significant relationship between age and attitude towards SMA. Among the interviewed, all of them 10 (10%) have had self medicated their children in the the last six month. Care givers declared to store medicine at home for future use, used old prescription to obtain medicines, and shared medicine with friends/family members. Influence from friends and relatives, advice from dispensers, advice from medical personnel, and personal experience were factors influencing SMA. Respondents found SMA to be convenient, economical, time saving, and suitable for minor illnesses. Ailments for SMA found to be flue, cough, chicken pox, oral thrush, fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, and skin rashes. It is recommended that awareness and education targeting the general population need to be initiated to impact sufficient knowledge regarding irrational use of medicines particularly SMA.