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PATCHARAPORN PANYAWUTHIKRAI: EVALUATING AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM ON DISPENSING BEHAVIOR BETWEEN INTERVENTION AND CONTROL GROUPS OF DRUG STORES IN BANGKOK. THESIS ADVISORS: PETCHARAT PONGCHAROENSUK, Ph.D., SAUWAKON RATANAWIJITRASIN, Ph.D. 131P. ISBN 974-663-365-1

This is a comparative study of an educational program on dispensing behavior between pharmacy staff of the control and the intervention groups of pharmacies in Bangkok. Thirty-nine matched pairs of pharmacies were selected from eight clusters of districts in Bangkok. Four educational programs of urinary tract infection, children's diarrhea, dispensing practice of steroids and rational use of antibiotics, were provided to pharmacy staff during January and February 1999. The methodology of this educational program was a seminar and workshop. For the sampling pharmacies that could not attend the seminar, a field-visit or face-to-face intervention was done. After the educational intervention, the simulated client method was used to evaluate dispensing behavior of the four scenarios in both control and intervention groups. It was found that pharmacies in the intervention group did better in dispensing behavior of the four scenarios. There were more questions asked and more advice recommended in urinary tract infection for the intervention group than in the control group. It showed 80.87% of all visits asking questions before drug dispensing with the average number of questions asked per visit of the intervention group, 1.99 while it showed 62.56% and 1.07 respectively in the control group. Intervention pharmacies preferred symptomatic treatment, such as anti-spasmodic drugs for urinary tract infection. For diarrhea, Oral Rehydration Salt (ORS) was dispensed in 31.43% of all visits in the intervention and 22.05% in the control group. When antibiotics were requested, 99.49% of patients in the control group and 98.86% of the intervention group got the drugs. There were only 1.03% of patients in the control group and 3.43% of the intervention group received full course antibiotics of 5 days. Concerning steroids request, the pharmacy staff asked for the required prescription only 5.64% of all visits in the intervention group compared to 1.54% of the control group. In about 33.71% of all visits, the pharmacy staff in the intervention group did not dispense steroids as requested because of law regulation while only 15.9% of the control group also did not. The study also showed that the pharmacy staff were likely to have more interest in attending the seminar, planning to get more information, and were more likely to change their dispensing behavior than the group of field-visit that were less motivated to change. In conclusion, an educational program resulted in improving quality and quantity of questions asked before dispensing and also general recommendations and advice. However, it did not successfully change actual irrational drug dispensing.