

HH.AHS.6

## **AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEED FOR CLINICAL / WARD PHARMACY SERVICES IN SRI LANKA IN PROMOTING RATIONAL DRUG THERAPY**

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In most countries the responsibility of promoting rational drug therapy lies in the hands of clinical pharmacists. Their key functions are the identification, prevention and solution of Drug Related Problems (DRPs). Although this is a new concept for Sri Lanka and no studies have been done so far, a lot of work has been done in the world to demonstrate the impact of clinical pharmacy services. The objectives of this study were to assess the need for clinical pharmacists in Sri Lankan hospital in patient care, focusing on the prevalence of DRPs and to understand the perception of doctors and nurses on introducing this service.

This prospective observational study was done in a government hospital and in a private hospital, including 50 adult patients from each hospital admitted to medical wards for more than three days. Their drug therapy details were gathered and reviewed to identify the DRPs. These DRPs were categorized according to the PCNE V5.01 classification scheme (the DRP classification constructed by the Pharmaceutical Care Network Europe). Two separate questionnaires were administered to 50 doctors and nurses respectively for the survey study.

Ninety two percent of the government hospital patients and 80% of the private hospital patients included in this study had at least one or more DRPs. A total of 86 and 83 DRPs were identified in the government and private hospital patient samples respectively. The most prevailing DRP identified in both hospitals is the Drug Choice Problem. According to the survey study results, 60% of the doctors believe the addition of clinical pharmacists will increase support for them in rationalizing drug therapy, but, only 10% of the nurses think there will be an increase in support.

This study showed that DRPs occur frequently in hospital in patient care. How the intervention of clinical pharmacists may result in preventing these problems should be further studied.