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Title: *Pharmacists' knowledge, perceptions, and practices regarding herbal medicine*

Introduction: Herbal medicine sales have increased over the years and since consumers may not understand the potential safety concerns of using herbal medicines, especially when combined with other drugs, it is important for pharmacists to be knowledgeable about herbal medicines. They should also have the ability to effectively counsel on their uses and risks. The purpose of this study was to: 1) assess community pharmacists' knowledge, perceptions, and practices regarding herbal medicines, 2) to understand the impact pharmacists may have on their patients' herbal medicine use, and 3) to gauge what practices could be improved.

Methods: An anonymous survey was distributed to community pharmacists through email, social media, and in-person at local pharmacies. The survey consisted of general background questions, questions assessing perceptions and practices regarding herbal medicine, and a ten-question true/false quiz to assess knowledge. Survey data was collected and assessed using Qualtrics and Excel.

Results: Of the 127 community pharmacists who completed the survey, only 34% were confident in their ability to effectively counsel patients on herbal medicines. Approximately 50% of pharmacists reported never or rarely asking patients about herbal medicine use and 80% reported never or rarely documenting herbal medicine use. Only 25% of pharmacists reported that they always discuss side effects and 19% reported that they always discuss herb-drug interactions when patients are using herbal medicines. The average quiz score assessing knowledge of herbal medicines was 6.06 out of 10.

Conclusions: It is important for community pharmacists to be knowledgeable about herbal medicines and prepared to educate patients to ensure safe medication use. Pharmacists need to acknowledge the use of herbal medicine in their patients and always discuss potential side effects and herb-drug interactions. It is also important that pharmacists know where they can find reliable information on herbal medicines and use evidence-based resources when possible.