

# A Nation-Wide Assessment of Community Pharmacists' Attitude towards Dispensing Medication Errors: A Cross-sectional Study

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## Abstract

Dispensing errors in community pharmacies are common reasons for a patient's injury and harm. Therefore, to improve patient safety in relation to the use of medicine in the primary care setting, the study sought to determine the attitude and perception of community pharmacists towards dispensing errors. A survey-based cross-sectional study consisted of 171 community pharmacists in different regions in Lebanon. This study retrieved information about demographic data, perceived factors associated with dispensing errors, perceived strategies that might reduce the risk for dispensing error, perceived types of dispensing errors and reasons for underreporting dispensing errors. The majority of the pharmacists were young between 20 to 35 years (87.1%) and holding only BS degree in Pharmacy (66.7%). Poor prescription handwriting (90%), unreadable prescriptions (89.4%) and heavy workload (87.7%) were perceived as the main contributing factors for dispensing error. While Collaboration with physicians (96.4%) and double-checking (96%) of medications before dispensing were mainly appreciated to decrease error incidents. The main reasons for underreporting dispensing errors were non-mandatory reporting policy (58.5%) and absence of national reporting system (55.6%). Dispensing errors were highly associated with the quality of the prescription and heavy workload. Pharmacists' main reason for underreporting dispensing errors was mainly due to lack of reporting systems that do not mandate the pharmacist to report it. These findings enlighten future interventions to improve pharmacy practices that aim in providing new directives for policies and procedures for reporting and managing dispensing errors in the Lebanese community pharmacies.

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