



The Importance of Pharmaceutical Care in Pharmacy Practice in Saudi Arabia

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DESCRIPTION

Pharmaceutical care is one of the clinical pharmacy subjects for pharmacy undergraduates where the students have to study it at level 9 and 10 pharmacy programs in Saudi Arabia. It's a very important subject as one of the goals of pharmacy in Saudi is to prepare pharmacy students to be clinical pharmacists through the certified residency program. Thus, having strong clinical background is crucial to help the students to pass the requirements to be eligible for such programs such as special professional licensure examinations in Saudi Arabia. For this purpose, it is important to prepare the students to have good understanding of these clinical subjects to be able to ensure the safety and efficacy of medications in clinical settings. Being a faculty at teaching university, I have worked on developing clinical subjects to fill the gaps in order to enhance student's clinical understanding. I have decided to make major modifications to this subject which involves the four steps of pharmaceutical care process which are: assessment, developing care plan to solve drug therapy problems, and implementation of care plan and evaluating the plan. The course modifications involve the following.

Firstly, Alignment theoretical part with the practical lab of the subject to reduce the gap between the practical and theoretical parts, and also to give the students a chance to apply what they have learnt in the theoretical part on weekly basis in the lab, as the lab takes up to 6 hours per week of their schedule. Secondly, adding 2 new lectures of lab interpretations to the course. They are a very important part to help the students to learn to interpret

patients lab results and therefore choosing the most appropriate medications, where lab results can tell a lot about patients' diseases and the function of patient's organs such as renal and liver status which are vital in case of medications selection and dose adjustment to ensure the effective use of medications and patients safety. Thirdly, instead of teaching vital signs theoretically, an arrangement was carried out with a nursing college, the students have gotten a chance to visit the nursing college to be trained by a qualified nurse of how to take and read vital signs for a patient. Fourthly, there was a lecture about drug therapy problems, this lecture was divided into seven categories and in each case study the students asked to go through all these seven categories to check if the patients are experiencing any one of these medication errors or even more. Fifthly, to solve a case study, Subjective Objective Assessment Plan (SOAP) note format was developed in a systematic way and each section of the SOAP note was explained in details in the theoretical part and applied on the practical lab by the students. This to ensure the students has a complete and full understanding to solve any case in a systematic way. The students searching skills were enhanced by teaching them the method to accesses reliable resources to find out the drug related information using reliable medical resources that they need to solve a given case study during a lab.

At the end of the course, the students were given a post-course survey and asked to fill it out to provide their feedback, the result was satisfactory as most of the students mentioned the usefulness of adding the lab results interpretation lectures, accessibility of drug information resources and almost all of the students mentioned that they are confident to use SOAP note and know how to arrange the required information to solve case studies.