



DOI: 10.5505/anatoljfm.2021.63644

Anatol J Family Med 2021;4(2):199–200

Irrational Drug Usage in Turkey: The Need for More Active Educational Intervention among Health Care Professionals and Patients

 Zakir Khan,  Yusuf Karatas

Department of Pharmacology, Institute of Health Sciences, Cukurova University, Faculty of Medicine, Adana, Turkey

Dear Editor,

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about 50% of all drugs are inappropriately prescribed, dispensed, or sold worldwide. Moreover, 50% of patients do not take their medications properly.^[1] Globally, irrational drug usage is a public health concern. Some examples of irrational drug usage include polypharmacy, overuse of injections and antibiotics, prescription of overpriced medications, self-medication practices, failure to prescribe medications based on clinical protocol evidences, and utilization of non-pharmacological treatment strategies. The practice of irrational prescription by health care professionals (HCPs) leads to wastage of resources, adverse drug reactions, inaccurate medications, and patient's distrust on HCPs and the health care system.^[2]

Irrational drug usage is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality and although there are many factors that promote the practice of rational drug usage, most of the responsibilities fall on HCPs.^[3] However, the lone attempts of HCPs to make reasonable rational practices are inadequate and this should be followed by patient implementation. Patients play a pivotal role in rational prescribing decisions because their beliefs and expectations have a strong effect on the effectiveness and success of medical care.^[4] HCPs should provide detailed guidance to patients for each drug prescribed, including information related to drug indication, purposes, mechanism of action, route of administration, dosage regimens, possible advantages, common and severe side effects, and follow-up schedules. It is reported that, patients who interact and communicate clearly with HCPs have improved compliance, increased trust, and satisfaction with the health care system.^[2,3]

According to the Rational Drug Use National Action Plan of Turkey, the Ministry of Health should set up a rational drug usage center in each province and hospital. The responsibilities of the center and team would be the promotion of activities related to rational drug usage and provision of education and training to HCPs and patients.^[5] Even for establishing WHO-standard rational drug usage policies, there has been a failure to achieve the possible aims of the program. Irrational drug usage has become a major health concern in Turkey.^[3,6] Moreover, according to a recent WHO report, Brazil spent more than twice per capita on health as compared to Turkey, even though they have comparable gross domestic product per capita.^[7] Possible reasons include a large number of patient-check ups, overburden on HCPs, ill-informed attitude of patients, communication barriers, lack of knowledge about rational drug usage among HCPs and patients, and the lack of systematic follow-up of the activities of HCPs by



Please cite this article as: Khan Z, Karatas Y. Irrational Drug Usage in Turkey: The Need for More Active Educational Intervention among Health Care Professionals and Patients. *Anatol J Family Med* 2021;4(2):199–200.

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Zakir Khan. Department of Pharmacology, Institute of Health Sciences, Cukurova University, Faculty of Medicine, Adana, Turkey

Phone: +90 531 592 11 09

E-mail: zakirkhan300@gmail.com

Received Date: 07.01.2021

Accepted Date: 09.02.2021

Published online: 20.08.2021

©Copyright 2021 by Anatolian Journal of Family Medicine - Available online at www.anatoljfm.org

OPEN ACCESS



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.

health care authorities.^[3,4] Therefore, intensive and periodic studies are needed in Turkey for raising awareness and promoting rational drug usage among HCPs and patients.^[3,4,6]

Additionally, the government needs to allocate a higher health care budget, and patients should be informed in detail about drug usage, especially by their HCPs and also by public education programs. Compulsory and periodic rational drug usage training programs for HCPs and patients in all private and public health facilities are also required to improve patient care and rational pharmacotherapy.

REFERENCES

1. Khan Z, Ahmed N, Zafar S, Ullah Khan F, Ur Rehman A, Parreiras Martins MA, et al. A pilot study on the rational use of medicines in four tertiary care hospitals through validated World Health Organization prescribing drugs indicators. *Ann Ig* 2020;32(4):368–75.
2. Urszula R, Teresa P. Rational drug use in hospital settings – areas that can be changed. *J Med Econ* 2020;(23)10:1205–8. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
3. Calikoglu EO, Koycegiz E, Kosan Z, Aras A. Rational drug use and prescribing behavior of family physicians in Erzurum, Turkey. *Niger J Clin Pract* 2019;22(5):626–32.
4. Basaran NF, Akici A. Patients' experience and perspectives on the rational use of drugs in Turkey: a survey study. *Patient Prefer Adherence* 2012;6:719–24. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
5. Ministry of health. Turkish medicines and medical devices agency. Rational drug use national action plan. 2014-2017. Available at: <http://www.akilciilac.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Rational-Drug-Use-National-Action-Plan.pdf>. Accessed May 28, 2021.
6. Khan Z, Karataş Y, Rahman H. Adverse drug reactions reporting in Turkey and barriers: an urgent need for pharmacovigilance education. *Ther Adv Drug Saf* 2020;11:2042098620922483. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
7. WHO). Global spending on health: a world in transition. 2019. Available at: https://www.who.int/health_financing/documents/health-expenditure-report-2019.pdf?ua=1. Accessed May 28, 2021.