**Pharmacists protect the community by assisting in the reduction of drug abuse and dependence in Iraq's al-Basra province.**

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**Abstract**

**Background:** Prescription drugs are well-known to be highly addictive, which contributes to the epidemic that continues to affect people in our country. Pharmacists act as gatekeepers between prescribers of these drugs and their patients, putting them in an ideal position to screen for drug misuse among patients getting these prescriptions and counsel them on safe usage.

**Objectives:** The pharmacist's ethical responsibility is to serve the community. The pharmacist's advice to patients is one of the services provided to the public in order to improve their condition. This service also aims to assist people in troubleshooting and resolving issues related to behavior change. However, it may also assist a drug abuser in making a successful attempt to quit. The goal of this study is to look into pharmacists' roles in reducing addiction and substance abuse.

**Methods:** Following the training, participating pharmacists were given all of the materials and topics related to the misuse of drugs that cause risk, such as addiction. The 244 volunteers were analyzed, and divided into two main groups, the first one for adult cases and the other for pediatric cases. The adult population was divided into subgroups based on their health status. All ages were considered as part of the inclusion criteria, and interviews began on July 10 and ran through August 20, 2022. After data collection was complete, a t-test was used to analyze the data and determine significance.

**Results:** Following this survey, the results show that of the 230 participants who were enrolled, 70.1% were identified as healthy individuals, while 29.9% had chronic diseases like cardiac disease, diabetes, and respiratory problems. Among the 20%, 17.7%, 14.8%, 13.5%, and 13.5% of participants who received education on the advantages and risks of using diazepam and allermine tablets, amitriptyline tablets, lyrica capsules, rivotril, and tegretol tablets, respectively. In this research project, the participating pharmacists also reported an improved ability to identify and diagnose patients at risk of drug overdoses as a result of training received before the study began. This improved the conversation with the patients, ultimately leading to advanced patient care and patient education.

**Conclusion:** Pharmacists play a vital role in preventing drug abuse and overdose, but their work is constricted by structural factors in the pharmacy profession. Community pharmacists additionally offer clinical preventive services, such as education, screenings, to enhance population health.

**Keywords:** Community pharmacist, pharmacist, gatekeeper, drug abuse, addiction.