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The Factors Associated With the Occurrence of
Medication Errors in the Ministry of Health
Hospitals in Saudi Arabia: A Cross-Sectional
Study of Nurses

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Declaration

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Abstract

Aim: to investigate the factors associated with occurrence of medication errors (ME) in Ministry of Health hospitals in Saudi Arabia.

Objective: To investigate nurses' views on factors that contribute to medication errors.

Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive survey was undertaken. A convenient sample of 152 nurses from three hospitals was obtained. Respondents were asked to determine factors associated with the occurrence of medication errors

Results: A total of 152 of 300 (50.7%) questionnaires were returned. Exactly half of the respondents had been involved in medication errors once or more during their nursing career, with 26.97% (n= 41) having reported one or more medication errors at some point in their nursing career. A significant number (n= 131 86%) of respondents identified that unclear writing or illegible medication orders or prescriptions was the most significant factor in ME. Other highly significant factors contributing to errors included poor communication between nurses and physicians (n= 118, m=3.99), similarity in the name of medications (n= 114, m=3.92), similarity in the appearance of medications (n= 114, m=3.91), interruptions while preparing or administering medications (n= 101, m=3.71) , stressful working environments (n= 105, m=3.66), and a lack of medication safety education programs (n= 94, m=3.55).

Conclusion: There are a range of factors that contribute to ME, of those the most significant is unclear or illegible medication orders or prescriptions. This study has identified a range of other factors in Saudi Arabian hospitals leading to medication errors, further research could be directed to the appropriate strategies to reduce them.

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