

The wall of distrust is tall yet between the patients and pharmacists; a study to unwrapped this sophisticated skein

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Abstract:

Despite the vast efforts to stabilize the key position of the pharmacist in the health system, many people summarize the role of pharmacists in selling and distributing of medicines and in this way the pharmacists are less likely to be imagine as the drug advisers by the patients. One of the major reasons of non-efficient interaction between the pharmacist and the patient is the inappropriate design of the physical space of the pharmacies. The main examples of this mis-design categorized as four cases: inappropriate design of the counter, existence the glass barriers between the patient and pharmacist, absence of counseling room and waiting space of the pharmacy to preserve the patient's distance with other patients, and his privacy right in counselling procedure. The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of these parameters on the viewpoint of pharmacists and patients about the quality of drug counselling services.

This descriptive-analytic study was conducted in two phases. The first step was the evaluation of pharmacies corresponding to the four above mentioned physical parameters. The second step was to evaluate the views of pharmacists and patients related to the impact of the mentioned parameters on the quality of drug counselling and their satisfaction with these services. This phase was performed through filling the two separate questionnaires for two target population groups (30 pharmacists and 90 patients). Data were analyzed using SPSS software and statistical tests.

The results showed that the design of the physical space of the pharmacies is often non-standard, suffered from lacking of the consulting rooms and suitable waiting space, inappropriate glass barriers and non-standard height of counters. The results of the questionnaires' indicated that the mentioned defects caused an insecure space to the patients and, as a result, their reluctance to receive pharmaceutical counseling from pharmacists. On the other hand, despite the emphasis of pharmacists to change the physical space of pharmacies to deliver the pharmaceutical services beter, they identified the economic factor as one of the most important obstacles to reach this goal.

With regard to these findings, it is necessary to change the pharmacy space in order to provide better services. These changes should be such that provide a safe, private, comfortable, and direct access between the patient and pharmacist. Based on the findings of the present and other studies, a schematic design of an ideal pharmacy is proposed in this presentation.

Key Words: Pharmaceutical services, counter design, consulting room, drug counselling, patient privacy