

Knowledge and Perceptions of Final Year Medical Students in Iraqi Universities about Generic Medicines

Abstract

Objective: To explore and evaluate final year medical students' perceptions of and knowledge about generic medicines in Iraqi universities. Methods: A cross-sectional survey was conducted between 1st June 2010 and 31st July 2010 in six Iraqi public universities offering courses in medicine. Results: Responses were received from 546 medical students (response rate 69.6%). More than 60% of study participants thought that generic medicines are inferior, less effective and produce more side effects compared to brand name medicines. These findings highlight that final year medical students need a better understanding of the principles and concepts of bioavailability and bioequivalence if they are to contribute appropriately to generic medicine use. Conclusions: This study clearly shows that medical students in Iraq lack of understanding on issues related to generic medicine use. In order to encourage the use of generic medicines in Iraq, medical students need to be receiving a better education on the issues relating to generic medicines and generic prescribing. This could be achieved by including the relevant topics in the current medical education curriculum.