

The Invisible Pharmacist

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Background

At a recent hospital accreditation survey, nursing staff were asked how frequently they saw a clinical pharmacist on their ward with nursing staff stating twice a month. Data collected from intervention statistics and electronic consult notes can prove that the clinical pharmacists were on the ward at least once every day. Research and a survey were conducted to try to explain the lack of visibility of clinical pharmacy staff.

Aim

To provide a nursing staff perspective on the aspects of pharmacy services that were of most impact and visibility to them.

Methods

A survey was presented to randomly selected nursing staff on nine different wards. Data of clinical pharmacy activities were collected on the same day as the survey to show the perceived ward presence of clinical pharmacists versus actual presence. International literature was reviewed on the perception of clinical pharmacy service provision.

Results

9 wards were surveyed

26 surveys were returned

6/9 wards had had a clinical pharmacist visit that day

with the reason being logged on an intervention or on an electronic consult note

Only **19%** of respondents noted that clinical services had been supplied to the wards that day

7% of those surveyed could not name one member of the pharmacy team

77% could only name one member of the pharmacy team [14 names were possible]



Conclusion

The pharmacy clinical services did not appear to be visible to the nursing staff in over 80% of those surveyed. Services such as imprest management and dispensing [ie roles related to drug supply] were much more visible as a service provided by pharmacy. The personality type of the hospital pharmacist is perhaps one of the reasons for their lack of visibility, and this aspect requires further research.