

DEVELOPING CLINICAL PHARMACY COMPETENCES IN THE CARE OF PATIENTS WITH CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

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INTRODUCTION

The ‘Clinical Pharmacy’ module within the Master of Pharmacy (M.Pharm.) course at the Department of Pharmacy of the University of Malta is aimed at developing a comprehensive and holistic approach to patient care and medicines management.

Skills and competences related to clinical pharmacist interventions in patient care in different care settings, including cardiology, are developed in this module.

AIMS

To devise and deliver sessions within the ‘Clinical Pharmacy’ module to support M.Pharm. students in developing clinical pharmacy competences in the care of patients with cardiovascular disorders.

METHOD

- The learning outcomes for the sessions relating to the care of patients with cardiovascular disorders were established as:
1) To demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of evidence-based drug therapy interventions, 2) To analyse patient information, and 3) To recommend appropriate clinical pharmacy management plans.
- Three sessions (2 hours each) adopting case-based learning were developed and delivered to all the 25 M.Pharm. students enrolled in academic year 2018-19.
- The case-based sessions covered 6 cardiovascular disorders and 10 patient cases were discussed over the three sessions.

Session 1: Stable Angina and Acute Coronary Syndrome
Session 2: Hypertension and Heart Failure
Session 3: Atrial fibrillation and Stroke

RESULTS

- The delivery of the three case-based sessions consisted of:
1) Systematic analysis and interpretation of patient information, and 2) Pharmaceutical care planning (Table 1).
- The students were familiarised with recent clinical evidence and drug information resources on the topics, namely latest updates of the British National Formulary, European Society of Cardiology guidelines and United Kingdom National Institute for Care Excellence clinical guidelines.
- At the end of the third session, a case-based classwork with 12 multiple-choice questions was administered. The students were allowed 30 minutes to attempt the classwork and a discussion held afterwards.

Table 1: Structure of case-based discussions

Systematic Analysis and Interpretation of Patient Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Patient detailsClinical features/symptoms of presenting complaintMedical and drug historyFamily and social historySigns and investigations on examination
Pharmaceutical Care Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifying risk factors and active problemsEstablishing goals of therapyDeveloping a clinical pharmaceutical care plan for acute and long-term pharmacotherapeutic managementInterpreting biochemistry and haematological laboratory resultsIdentifying need for further investigationsReflecting on comorbidities and concomitant medicationsIdentifying drug therapy problemsRecommending patient monitoring and advice

Pharmacist professional obligations towards patients including ethical responsibilities, and collaboration with physicians and other health care professionals were highlighted in the sessions.

CONCLUSION

The model developed for this learning activity supports students to mobilise earlier knowledge gained in their pharmacotherapeutics classes, refer to clinical guidelines and participate in case-based discussions.