Current Status and Attitudes toward Online Medication Instruction among Community Pharmacists

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Abstract

Telemedicine was advocated to minimize contact during the spread of infectious diseases and improve the operational efficiency and quality of medical care. The revised Pharmaceutical Affairs Law allows pharmacists to provide online medication instructions. Currently, the use of online medication instruction is being promoted alongside traditional in-person consultations for effective communication; however, its implementation is currently transitional, yet to undergo widespread acceptance, and its actual status is unclear. Therefore, a survey was conducted among community pharmacists to determine the state of the online medication education environment and equipment, its implementation, and the attitudes of pharmacists toward incorporating it into their work. The results showed that approximately 20% of respondents worked in pharmacies with equipment and environment for online consultation; most of these pharmacies were located in corporations with more than 20 pharmacies. Approximately 40% of these pharmacists were implementing online consultations to provide medication counseling to patients with infectious diseases and to improve the quality of medical care by responding to patient queries remotely and following up after administering medication. Pharmacists also suggested that the implementation of online medication administration guidance was a positive addition to their work. Furthermore, younger respondents were found to be more enthusiastic regarding incorporating online medication instructions into their work; however, this percentage decreased as the age of the respondents increased.