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## ABSTRACT

### Factors Influencing Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Relating to Asthma Management Among Pharmacists: A Cross-Sectional Study from Palestine

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**Background:** Asthma is a prevalent chronic respiratory condition characterized by airway inflammation and narrowing. In Palestine, physician-diagnosed asthma affects 3.8% of the population, with 8.9% reporting recent wheezing. Despite the availability of international guidelines, asthma-related morbidity and mortality remain high, often due to poor disease control, inadequate treatment, and incorrect inhaler use. Effective management requires collaboration among healthcare professionals, patients, and families. Drug-related problems (DRPs) further hinder treatment outcomes. Integrating pharmacists through pharmaceutical care (PC) services can significantly enhance asthma management by improving adherence, optimizing inhaler technique, and addressing DRPs. Prior studies support the positive role of pharmacists in managing asthma and other chronic conditions.

**Objectives:** This study aims to assess Palestinian pharmacists' knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to asthma management, focusing on medication use, patient education, and clinical application.

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**Methods:** A cross-sectional survey was conducted among registered, practicing pharmacists in Palestine using a validated questionnaire. The tool collected data on sociodemographic characteristics, asthma knowledge, pharmaceutical care knowledge, attitudes toward treatment, personal use, and perceived barriers. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data.

**Results:** A total of 402 pharmacists participated. Most were female (65.9%) and young (59.2% aged 20–29). Staff pharmacists made up the majority (79.4%), and 89.1% worked in community pharmacies. Educational backgrounds included Bachelor's (77.4%), Master's (11.9%), Pharm D (9.2%), and PhD (1.5%). Experience varied, with 31.8% having less than one year and 25.9% over ten years. Most pharmacies were located in cities (73.9%), and 53% were open 80–120 hours per week. Knowledge assessment revealed that 57.2% of pharmacists were classified as "knowledgeable," 29.4% had "fair" knowledge, and 13.4% had "poor" knowledge. Males scored slightly higher than females, but the difference was not statistically significant. Knowledge did not vary significantly by age or experience, though pharmacy managers (73.5%) were more knowledgeable than owners (38.2%) and staff pharmacists (56.7%) ( $p=0.014$ ). Inpatient hospital pharmacists had the highest knowledge levels (75%), and advanced degree holders performed better, though small sample sizes limited generalizability. Attitudes and pharmaceutical care knowledge scores were generally high. Pharmacists showed strong confidence in their role in asthma management, especially in patient education and treatment monitoring. Positive attitudes were evident toward ongoing professional training and collaboration with other healthcare providers. However, several barriers were identified. Time constraints affected both pharmacists (60.5%) and patients (63.9%). Nearly half of the respondents reported inadequate knowledge (49%) and lack of access to asthma action plans (60.3%). Furthermore, 65.6% noted that patients do not view asthma care as part of the pharmacist's role. Regression analysis showed minimal correlation between sociodemographic factors and knowledge or attitudes, with only workplace setting showing a modest effect.



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**Conclusion:** Palestinian pharmacists demonstrate strong potential to improve asthma outcomes. While their knowledge and attitudes are largely positive, targeted education, system-level support, and greater public awareness are essential to maximize their impact in asthma care.

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