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THE ANTIBIOTIC PRESCRIPTION KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE AMONG DENTISTS AND DENTAL STUDENTS IN SAUDI ARABIA: A SCOPING REVIEW

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Abstract

Background: In recent years, antibiotic resistance has increased significantly due to inappropriate prescribing practices, presenting a critical global health challenge. Evidence indicates inappropriate antibiotic prescribing among dental practitioners in Saudi Arabia.

Objectives: To conduct a scoping review of published literature reporting on knowledge levels and antibiotic prescribing practices among dental practitioners in Saudi Arabia.

Methods: Three databases (PubMed, ProQuest, and Scopus) were searched for relevant studies. Eligible studies (primary research conducted in Saudi Arabia) were categorized into three domains: (1) knowledge among dental students, (2) knowledge among dentists, and (3) prescribing practices among dentists. The quality of included studies was assessed using the Newcastle–Ottawa Scale.

Results: Of 407 retrieved records, 22 studies met the inclusion criteria. Most studies (n = 21) were cross-sectional. The majority assessed knowledge among dental students, interns, and practicing dentists. Two studies analyzed medical records and prescribing patterns, while one study was a clinical audit that demonstrated positive outcomes, including reduced prescribing and increased awareness. Overall, most studies reported low knowledge levels and inappropriate prescribing patterns among dental students and interns.



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Conclusions: Only one study evaluated an interventional approach (clinical audit), which showed a significant reduction in inappropriate prescriptions. Future research should focus on implementing and evaluating interventions to improve awareness and reduce inappropriate antibiotic prescribing.

Keywords: Antibiotic prescription; Dentists; Saudi Arabia; Antibiotic stewardship.