

Patients knowledge on side effects of anti-psychotic medications: A quantitative study at ankafu psychiatric hospital, Ghana

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Introduction/Problem Statement: Anti-psychotics are the backbone for treatment of the mentally ill, particularly patients presenting with psychotic. However, these medications are associated with a range of side effects so that, knowledge on any side effects is particularly important to patient in order to bridge the knowledge gap on side effects for patients living with mental health problems.

Objective(s): The purpose of this study is to assess on side effects of medications particularly anti-psychotics in underdeveloped nation(s) such as Ghana. The study assessed patient's knowledge on side effects of anti-psychotic medications.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: The study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive design using quantitative research approach and structured questionnaire to elicit information from 126 in-patients. A constructivist Learning framework was utilized to focus on how patients learn meaningfully from their lived experiences in the context in which it occurs.

Findings/Results: The findings from the study indicated that generally 65.1%, 8.7% and 96.8% respondents have knowledge about anti-psychotic medications through family members, media and health-workers respectively. It was also revealed that 98.4% respondents experienced side effects such as constipation, diarrhea, nausea, stomach aches or dry mouth due to of anti-psychotic medications while 1.6% did not experienced any side effects from the anti-psychotic medications. Adopted strategies such as reporting to the hospital was 86.5%, 81.0% of the respondent reported to family relatives as means of managing the side effects of anti-psychotic medications while 33.3% managed anti-psychotics side effects by taking prescribed medications. Finally, the study showed that, 96.8% patients needed adequate information on side effects while 86.5% needed information on the dosage of their anti-psychotic medications.

Conclusion & Significance: In view of the research findings, it is recommended that, timely and continuous education should be given to patients regarding anti-psychotic medications by health care providers particularly nurses, pharmacist, doctors etc. in the areas of great concern to the patients.