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Pharmacist Empathy in Smoking Cessation Counseling

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Authors

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Abstract

Title: Pharmacist Empathy in Smoking Cessation Counseling

Authors: Caleb Lyman, Megan McNicol, Maria Miller, Yevgeniy Solokha, Kelly J. Wright, Aleda M.H. Chen

Abstract: Cigarette smoking and nicotine addiction are prevalent in today's society. Approximately 19% of American adults (43.8 million people) smoke cigarettes. Smoking is associated with health risks such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), infertility, low birth weight, respiratory symptoms, heart disease, and lung cancer and is responsible for roughly \$96 billion in health care costs. Provider empathy has been proven effective in other treatments like cold and cancer; however, its effectiveness in smoking cessation has not yet been studied. Empathy is defined in two realms: cognitive and affective. In the cognitive domain, individuals have the ability to understand and view the world from another's perspective, and in the affective domain, they can connect to the experiences or feelings of others. The twofold objective of this study is (1) to validate a modified Kiersma-Chen Empathy Scale to measure patient perceptions of provider empathy and (2) to determine if patients who view their pharmacists as empathetic achieve a higher quit rate in smoking cessation. The original Kiersma-Chen Empathy Scale is a previously-validated measure of provider empathy. Patients who are utilizing smoking cessation clinical services and meet inclusion criteria and whose quit date was at least 6 months prior, will complete three surveys 6 months after their quit date. The surveys conducted will measure patient demographics, quit status, and the patient's perceptions of their pharmacist's empathy (modified KCES). The collected data will be analyzed via a psychometric test to show the validity of the modified empathy scale and via a Spearman correlation to demonstrate the association between provider empathy and smoking cessation rates. The results of this study will provide beneficial information about how pharmacists can best assist their patients in smoking cessation, specifically regarding the empathy shown to the patient.