

Knowledge and Practice of Beauty Salon Owners towards Notification of Cosmetics: Findings from the State of Sarawak, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Background: Malaysia Ministry of Health regulates all cosmetics in the market through notification of cosmetics (NOC) under the Control of Drugs and Cosmetics Regulations 1984. This study investigated the knowledge and practice of beauty salon owners (BSO) towards the NOCs. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted among the beauty salons (BS) located in the four major cities of Sarawak (Kuching, Sibul, Bintulu and Miri) from 13th March to 31st May 2016. Due to no exhaustive list of BS in Sarawak existed, a total of 58 BS that met the selection criteria were identified through Google search engine with key terms. A structured questionnaire was self-administered to measure the knowledge and practice of BSO towards the NOC. **Results:** A total of 31 (53.4%) BSO agreed to participate in the study. Among them, 73% knew that every cosmetic in Malaysia needed to have notification number issued by the Ministry. Interestingly, only 19.4% of them knew what the notification number looked

like, and almost none of them (96.8%) knew how to apply for it. Moreover, only 6.45% of them applied notification number whenever they imported cosmetics. **Conclusion:** These findings provided valuable insights to the relevant authorities about the extant knowledge and practical gap of BSO towards NOC.

Key words: Cosmetic, Regulation, Beauty Salon Owner, Knowledge, Practice.

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INTRODUCTION

Cosmetic industry is growing rapidly around the globe.¹ Among the countries in Asia-Pacific region, its market value was the second highest after the European market.^{2,3} Notably, the expenditure for cosmetics and toiletries among Malaysian reached USD 407 million in 2013.²

The Malaysia government enacted the Control of Drugs and Cosmetics Regulations 1984 (CDCR'84) to regulate the manufacture, sell, supply, import, possess or administer of cosmetics.⁴ Under regulation 18A(1) of the CDCR'84, "No person shall manufacture, sell, supply, import, possess or administer any cosmetic unless (a) the cosmetic is a notified cosmetic; (b) unless he is the person responsible for placing the notified cosmetic in the market or a person authorized in accordance with the notification note which is issued by the Director of Pharmaceutical Services". The authority which regulates the cosmetic is the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA) under the Ministry of Health, Malaysia (MOH). All cosmetics industry players who intend to manufacture or import any cosmetic, must apply the notification of cosmetics (NOC) through NPRA. For those who locally purchase the cosmetic for resale purpose, possess or administer any cosmetic, have the responsibility to ensure the cosmetics are notified. In particular, a user-friendly platform Quest 3+ created by MOH has been available for the cosmetic industry players to verify the notification status of cosmetics.⁵ On the other hand, the authority which enforces the Regulation is the

Pharmacy Enforcement Division (PED) under the MOH. Between 2015 and early 2017, PED had confiscated cosmetics without notification (CWN) which worth RM 8.5 million.⁶ Moreover, some CWN were banned as found to contain mercury, hydroquinone and tretinoin.⁷

In Malaysia, beauty salons (BS) are the major points of access and referrals to cosmetics and aesthetic services.⁸ However, it was found that some of the BS failed to comply with the cosmetics Regulations by purchasing and supplying CWN to their customers.⁶ Hence, it is crucial for the beauty salon owners (BSO) to have sufficient knowledge and appropriate practices pertinent to the sell, supply, import, possess or administer of any cosmetic. However, to the best of our knowledge, there wasn't any published literature that provided evidences on the knowledge and practices of BSO towards the NOC. Hence, this study aimed to bridge the gap by investigating the knowledge and practices of BSO in Sarawak (Malaysia) towards the NOC.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This was a cross-sectional study conducted from 13th March to 31st May 2016. The approval from Malaysian Medical Research and Ethics Committee (ref. no.: (5) KKM/NIHSEC/P17-13) was obtained prior to the study. Only BS located in the four major cities of Sarawak (Kuching,

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