



Queensland University of Technology
Brisbane Australia

This is the author's version of a work that was submitted/accepted for publication in the following source:

[Lau, Esther T.L.](#), Steadman, Kathryn J., Mak, Marilyn, Cichero, Julie A.Y., & [Nissen, Lisa M.](#)

(2014)

Prevalence of swallowing difficulties and medication modification in customers of community pharmacists. In

APSA Annual Conference 2014, 5-7 December 2014, Brisbane, QLD. (Unpublished)

This file was downloaded from: <http://eprints.qut.edu.au/91880/>

© Copyright 2014 [please consult the author]

Notice: *Changes introduced as a result of publishing processes such as copy-editing and formatting may not be reflected in this document. For a definitive version of this work, please refer to the published source:*

<http://apsa-online.org/conferences.html>

Prevalence of swallowing difficulties and medication modification in customers of community pharmacists

Esther TL Lau^{1,2}, Kathryn J Steadman¹, Marilyn Mak¹, Julie AY Cichero¹, Lisa M Nissen^{1,2}

1. *School of Pharmacy, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Q*

2. *School of Clinical Sciences, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Q*

BACKGROUND: People may alter their solid oral medication dosage forms to make it easier to swallow. However, modification of solid medication dosage forms can lead to undesirable effects, and people may alter the dosage forms without informing the health professionals involved in their care.

AIM: To estimate the prevalence of swallowing difficulties and medication modification amongst community pharmacy consumers, and to investigate consumer views, attitudes, and interactions with health professionals regarding such issues.

METHODS: Consumers were recruited from five community pharmacies in Brisbane, Queensland and invited to participate in a structured interview.

RESULTS: A total of 369 consumers participated in the study. Overall, 16.5% of people reported experiencing swallowing difficulties, and 10.6% of all respondents reported modifying medication dosage forms. Almost half (44.2%) of those surveyed did not think there would be issues with modifying medication dosage forms. Some consumers would not seek advice from health professionals if they experienced swallowing problems and/or would not seek advice from health professionals before modifying their medication dosage forms, regardless of their thoughts about any problems associated with this practice.

CONCLUSION: Some consumers appeared to be accustomed to modifying medication dosage forms, even when there was no apparent or obvious need. People were also reluctant to seek advice from health professionals regarding swallowing difficulties, or modifying medication dosage forms. Health professionals must be assertive in educating consumers about swallowing problems, and medication dosage form modification.