

The Safety Blister

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

With great admiration and trust in the columns of your journal, I would like to bring to your kind attention the initiative that the Scientific Association Hospital & Clinical Risk Managers - HCRM, an association registered in the AgeNaS National Observatory of Good Practices on Health Safety, participated on 17 September 2022 in the "World Patient Safety Day", established by the World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO).

This year, under the slogan "Medication Without Harm", WHO called on all stakeholders to pay attention to higher risk situations such as patients on polypharmacy, care transitions and home management of high-risk medicines, with the objective of promoting the reconciliation of drugs in the various treatment contexts precisely because unsafe therapeutic practices, critical issues and errors related to therapy management represent one of the major causes of avoidable adverse events in health care also in faith of the Recommendation Ministerial n.17 "Reconciliation of Pharmacological Therapy".

HCRM, with the patronage of Cittadinanzattiva, involving the Risk Managers who are part of its scientific board, administered a questionnaire of 23 questions on a national scale, advertising it in a digital version with a Google form link, on the institutional sites of the healthcare facilities that joined. The Regions involved were: Sicily, Veneto, Puglia, Lombardy, Campania, Piedmont, Liguria.

The paper version of the same questionnaire was submitted to patients who went to the information desks of the healthcare facilities involved. A total of 1,007 questionnaires were collected (816 digital + 191 paper) and after a brief request for generic and anonymized data, the items were as follows:

1. Do you take or have you taken any drug therapy in the last month? (Yes, No)
2. Medications taken? (None, < 5, 5-10, > 10)
3. Number of medications (pills, vials, tablets, etc.) per day? (None, < 5, 5-10, > 10)
4. Do you respect the working hours? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
5. Do you respect the dosages that are prescribed? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
6. Does it respect the duration of the therapy? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
7. Do you keep the medicines in the original box? (Yes, Sometimes, No)

8. Before taking a drug, do you check the expiration date on the box? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
9. Do you store medicines in a safe place, not accessible to children? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
10. Do you store medicines at the temperature indicated on the box? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
11. Have you ever given one drug instead of another? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
12. Have you ever taken one drug instead of another? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
13. Have you ever stopped a therapy? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
 - a. If yes, why? (It had no effect, it bothered me, it cost too much, | already had too many
14. drugs)
15. Do you ask your doctor before suspending/taking on therapy? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
16. Have you ever confused the packaging of medicines because they are similar or of the same colour? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
17. Do you have a medication list that you or your doctor compiled? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
18. Do you have a written reminder to remember to take your medication? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
19. When you go to a doctor, do you bring with you the list of medicines, written and updated by your trusted doctor and specialist? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
20. When you go to a doctor, do they ask you for a list of medicines, written and updated by your trusted doctor and specialist? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
21. Is the medication list updated/confirmed after a visit to your doctor or specialist? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
22. Were you recently (last semester) in hospital, admitted? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
23. Have you ever been hospitalized or experienced illness due to drug-related problems? (Yes, Sometimes, No)
24. During your hospitalization, when you were administered therapy, were you asked to repeat your name, surname and date of birth? (Yes, Sometimes, No)

The results show that the participation of women compared to men was greater as regards above all the digital compilation of the questionnaire, reaching a percentage of 75.9%, that 49.9% of the participants were aged between 51- 70 years old, and 81.1% said they were a health worker. 60.9% stated that they take <5 pills per day of drug therapy, respecting both the dosages and the times of intake. The drugs are stored in adherence to the original packaging, respecting the expiry date with a percentage higher than 80% in both cases. This subsequently demonstrates that adequate conservation does not represent a confounder with respect to questions 11 and 12 as there are 91.6% affirmative answers and 94% no.

Unlike individual behaviours, in relations with the health facility or in relation to the health personnel discordant percentages are noted where, for example, in question 19 we found a percentage of only 33.5% of affirmative answers up to the point of concluding the discordance in the last question of the questionnaire which demonstrates how necessary it is to pursue adherence to good practices and Ministerial Recommendations in particular n.3.

During the hospitalization, when you were administered therapy, were you asked to repeat your name, surname and date of birth?

