

**Barriers and perceptions to
medication administration error
reporting among nurses in Saudi
Arabia**

by

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Abstract

Background: Medication administration errors (MAEs) are considered as a global problem which influences the safety of patients. Due to some factors MAEs are still underreported. However, MAEs have been under-researched in Saudi health settings. The reporting barriers of fear, perception of nurses towards reporting MAEs, and the process of reporting significantly contribute to failure to report. Understanding of factors that may inhibit reporting MAEs among nurses in Saudi Arabia is a primary step to improve the safety culture of hospitals. Furthermore, understanding nurses' perception toward MAEs reporting is the initial step to increasing the reporting rate.

Aims: (1) To identify factors from the literature that facilitate or hinder the reporting of medication administration errors among nurses and (2) to identify factors that nurses perceive as major contributors in the culture of reporting medication administration errors in Saudi Arabia hospitals.

Methods: a questionnaire was developed consisting of four pages to examine the nurses' perceptions and the potential barriers to the reporting of medication administration errors and an open-ended question to seek more understanding of this topic among nurses in Saudi Arabia. The questionnaire items included: demographics and background, nurses' perceptions of reporting medication administration errors and potential barriers to reporting MAEs. Participants for this study were nurses from three hospitals in Saudi Arabia. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Software the IBM (SPSS) Statistics was used to analyses the quantitative data and content analysis was used to analyses the qualitative data.

Results: A total of 366 nurses participated in the study with response rate 63.3%. Nurses' perception and awareness towards the importance of medication administration error reporting were positive. The major perceived barrier was fear of the consequences after reporting. This study found only 28.6% of nurses always reported MAEs when it occurs. Nursing administration (Head Nurse, Nursing Supervisor and/or Nursing Director) was the biggest concern affecting nurses' willingness to report MAEs. Making the work environment, a non-blame environment may encourage a greater reporting of MAEs.

Conclusions: Most nurses in Saudi Arabia's hospitals believed that MAEs must be reported. However, fear of blame or the possibility of legal action and administration factors lead to underreporting.

Implications for nursing management: Nursing administration should work towards establishing a blame free culture and support the safety culture to encourage reporting.

Key words: reporting barriers, medication administration errors, nurse, safety, reporting, report incident, culture of blame.