Abstract

Objective: This study describes Arkansas pharmacists’ knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs regarding emergency contraception.

Methods: A cross-sectional survey was conducted among a convenience sample of pharmacists prior to a continuing education lecture. The 16-item survey included multiple choice and true/false questions to assess knowledge in addition to Likert-type scale questions regarding attitudes and beliefs. Frequency and descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables. Results: Eighty-eight pharmacists completed the survey. A majority (73%) knew that Plan B had been FDA-approved for nonprescription use yet 42% believed that it works by disrupting a newly implanted ovum. On a scale from 1-5 where 5=strongly agree, the mean item score was 3.2 for whether emergency contraception should be available for nonprescription use with counseling and 1.6 for nonprescription use without counseling. When asked what they would do if presented with a request for emergency contraception, 45.8% indicated they would dispense the drug, 22.9% would refer the patient to another pharmacist or pharmacy, 3.6% would refuse to dispense, and 27.7% were not sure. Almost half (48.6%) did not believe they were competent instructing patients on the use of emergency contraception. Conclusions: The results show that pharmacists could benefit from additional training on emergency contraception.

Keywords

Contraception, Postcoital, Pharmacists, Attitude of Health Personnel, United States.