Objective: The study aimed to document the state of insomnia management at community pharmacies in Pakistan. Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted at randomly selected 371 pharmacies in three cities of Pakistan. Simulated patient visits were performed to collect information on case management of insomnia in terms of history taking and patient counseling at community pharmacies. The data was coded, entered and analyzed by using SPSS Version 16. Kruskal-Wallis and Mann Whitney tests (p<0.05) were performed to find out differences. Results: The patients were mainly handled by salesman 83.8% (n=311), by pharmacist 3.5% (n=13) and pharmacy assistants 12.7% (n=47). The mean dispensing time was 1.11 minutes (SD=5.61) with the range of 0.5 - 6 minutes. Of the 371 simulated patients who visited the pharmacies, 72.8% (n=270) subjects were given medicines and 24.3% (n=90) subjects were referred to the doctor for treatment of insomnia. 61.8% (n=193) of the subjects were given benzodiazepines, 35.6% (n=111) antihistamines and 2.6% (n=8) NSAIDs at community pharmacies in the three cities. The mean cost of treatment in case of insomnia was PKR12.7 (SD=10.13, median=10). Conclusions: The disease management of insomnia by community pharmacies in Pakistan is not appropriate. The overall process of history taking, medication counselling and referral practices at community pharmacies either located in rural or urban setting and irrespective of the provider type and location of pharmacies, in the three cities is limited.

Keywords
Sleep Initiation and Maintenance Disorders; Community Pharmacy Services; Professional Practice; Pharmacies; Patient Simulation; Pakistan