

Prevalence Of and Reasons for Medication Non-Adherence Among Patients 65 Years and Older with Hypertension, Hyperlipidaemia and Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus at A Primary Care Clinic in Singapore: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract

Background: The elderly population in Singapore is at increased risk of chronic diseases, including Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM), Hypertension (HTN), and Hyperlipidaemia (HL). These individuals often exhibit poorer medication adherence. However, limited information exists regarding the prevalence and reasons for medication non-adherence among elderly patients with chronic diseases in primary care settings. **Aims:** This study aims to assess the prevalence of medication non-adherence among elderly patients and identify associated demographic and clinical factors in a primary care context. **Methods:** A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 405 patients aged 65 and above with T2DM, HTN, and/or HL using convenience sampling. The self-administered questionnaire consisted of two parts: demographic and clinical data, and a locally validated adherence questionnaire available in English, Mandarin, and Malay to evaluate medication adherence and reasons for nonadherence. **Results:** Non-adherence to medication was reported in 40.7% of elderly patients. The main reasons for non-adherence included “I forgot” (23.5%), “I was too late with my dose” (19.0%), and “I was out of my routine” (17.8%). A significant association was found between non-adherence and the use of Complementary and Alternative Medicines (CAM) ($p=0.04$), with CAM users perceiving their health more negatively ($p<0.01$). **Conclusion:** Medication non-adherence is prevalent among elderly patients in Singapore's primary care setting, particularly among CAM users and those with poor self-perception of health. Clinicians should routinely screen for CAM use to identify patients at higher risk of non-adherence. Tailored interventions addressing specific reasons for non-adherence should be developed, and further research should explore the impact of CAM on medication adherence over time using the locally validated self-report measure.

Keywords: Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension, Hyperlipidaemia, Medication NonAdherence, Elderly, Older Patients, Primary Care, Singapore