

## **Medication dispensing errors in Palestinian community pharmacy practice: a formal consensus using the Delphi technique**

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### **Abstract:**

**Background :** Medication dispensing errors (MDEs) are frequent in community pharmacy practice. A definition of MDEs and scenarios representing MDE situations in Palestinian community pharmacy practice were not previously approached using formal consensus techniques.

**Objective:** This study was conducted to achieve consensus on a definition of MDEs and a wide range of scenarios that should or should not be considered as MDEs in Palestinian community pharmacy practice by a panel of community pharmacists.  
Setting Community pharmacy practice in Palestine.

**Method :** This was a descriptive study using the Delphi technique. A panel of fifty community pharmacists was recruited from different geographical locations of the West Bank of Palestine. A three round Delphi technique was followed to achieve consensus on a proposed definition of MDEs and 83 different scenarios representing potential MDEs using a nine-point scale.

**Main outcome :** measure Agreement or disagreement of a panel of community pharmacists on a proposed definition of MDEs and a series of scenarios representing potential MDEs.  
Results In the first Delphi round, views of key contact community pharmacists on MDEs were explored and situations representing potential MDEs were collected. In the second Delphi round, consensus was achieved to accept the proposed definition and to include 49 (59%) of the 83 proposed scenarios as MDEs. In the third Delphi round, consensus was achieved to include further 13 (15.7%) scenarios as MDEs, exclude 9 (10.8%) scenarios and the rest of 12 (14.5%) scenarios were considered equivocal based on the opinions of the panelists.

**Conclusion :** Consensus on a definition of MDEs and scenarios representing MDE situations in Palestinian community pharmacy practice was achieved using a formal consensus technique. The use of consensual definitions and scenarios representing MDE situations in community pharmacy practice might minimize methodological variations and their significant effects on the number and rate of MDEs reported in different studies.

**Key words:** Consensus, Delphi technique, definition of error, medication dispensing errors, medication errors, community pharmacy