The Role of Dispensers in the Rational Use of Drugs
The Role of Dispensers in the Rational Use of Drugs: Objectives

- Identify who can be a dispenser
- Identify factors that influence dispensing
- Describe methods to enhance dispenser/patient communications
- Identify ways to influence a dispenser's behavior
Case Report

A 20 yr. female student suffering from tonsilitis, seen by a doctor in a 600-bed hospital OPD. She obtained a drug from the hospital pharmacy, and took as instructed. She felt very weak after taking the drug, 3 days later she got severely comatose and was admitted to the same hospital. She took chlorpropamid 250 mg 4 times a day. The OPD doctor claimed that he prescribed chloromycetine 4x250 mg daily for her tonsilitis. The patient eventually died 2 weeks after hospital admission.
Who are Dispensers?

- Pharmacists, pharmacy technicians
- Pharmacy assistants
- Nurses, nurse aids
- Doctors
- Drug sellers
- Shop keepers
- Taxi drivers etc.
- Family members
Prescriber and Dispenser

In the real world of drug use (rational and irrational)

• **A PRESCRIBER IS:**
  Anyone with a recommendation for treatment.

• **A DISPENSER IS:**
  Anyone that give out the treatment.
What Does A Dispenser Need?

- **Knowledge/source of information:**
  - drug information
  - product information
  - consultation

- **Skills:**
  - communication skill
  - promotional/marketing techniques

- **Others:**
  - supply
  - dispensing equipment dispenser-prescriber relationship
  - status/role in the health care system
The Dispensing Process

- Receive Prescription
- Interpret Prescription
- Retrieve Medication/Ingredients
- Prepare and Process
- Communicate with Patient
- Assure Patient's Understanding
- Monitor Compliance by Patient
- Keep Records
Potential Error/Problems

- Wrong interpretation of prescription (or diagnosis)
- Retrieval of the wrong drug from stock
- Wrong dosages
- Inadequate packaging/labeling
- Inaccurate counting, compounding
- Inadequate or nonexistent labeling
- No knowledge of proper drug compliance
- Insufficient knowledge of the disease process
- Insufficient time to talk with patients about their drugs
- Inability to communicate to patients about therapy
Assessing Dispensing Conditions

- Dispensing point conditions
- Dispensing time? Communication time?
- How often do errors occur?
- Who is responsible for dispensing?
- Dispensing training in country?
- Salaries and wages for dispensers?
- Dispensing packaging?
Roles of Prescriber/Physician in Promoting Rational Drug Use

- Diagnosis
- Prescribing
- Drug Information
Roles of Pharmacist Dispenser in Ensuring Rational Drug Use

- Drug Procurement
- Drug Distribution
- Drug Prescribing
- Drug Information
- Additional roles:
  - Communication with physician
  - Treatment guidelines
  - Research on prescribing and utilization
  - Consumer education
Improving Patient Compliance with Therapy

- Dispenser - patient communication
- Packaging for patient use
- Labeling
- Written information
Dispenser-Patient Communication

- Dispensers communicate with patients how to take drugs
- Ensuring understanding is very important
Packaging for Patient Use
Labeling
Dispensing Public or Private Sector

- **Public Sector**
  - Cheap but long delays and frequent stock-outs
  - Generic Drugs

- **Private Sector**
  - Expensive but convenient
  - Brand name drugs
Interventions

- Ghana
  - Poster Intervention
- Uganda
  - Field Training
- Kenya and Indonesia
  - Private Drug Sellers
- Philippines
  - Discussions with the drug selling storekeepers
Conclusion

• Dispensing is a critical part of drug use.
• Dispensing is often neglected in training and EDP programs.
• Interventions exist to improve dispensing.
• Patients benefit from better dispensing.
Sample Package Insert