

An Assessment of Safety Culture in Prince Edward Island Community Pharmacies

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INTRODUCTION

As the scope of pharmacy practice is expanding, there is a growing interest to measure pharmacy professionals' attitudes on issues that pertain to patient safety as they impact patient outcomes and health care costs.

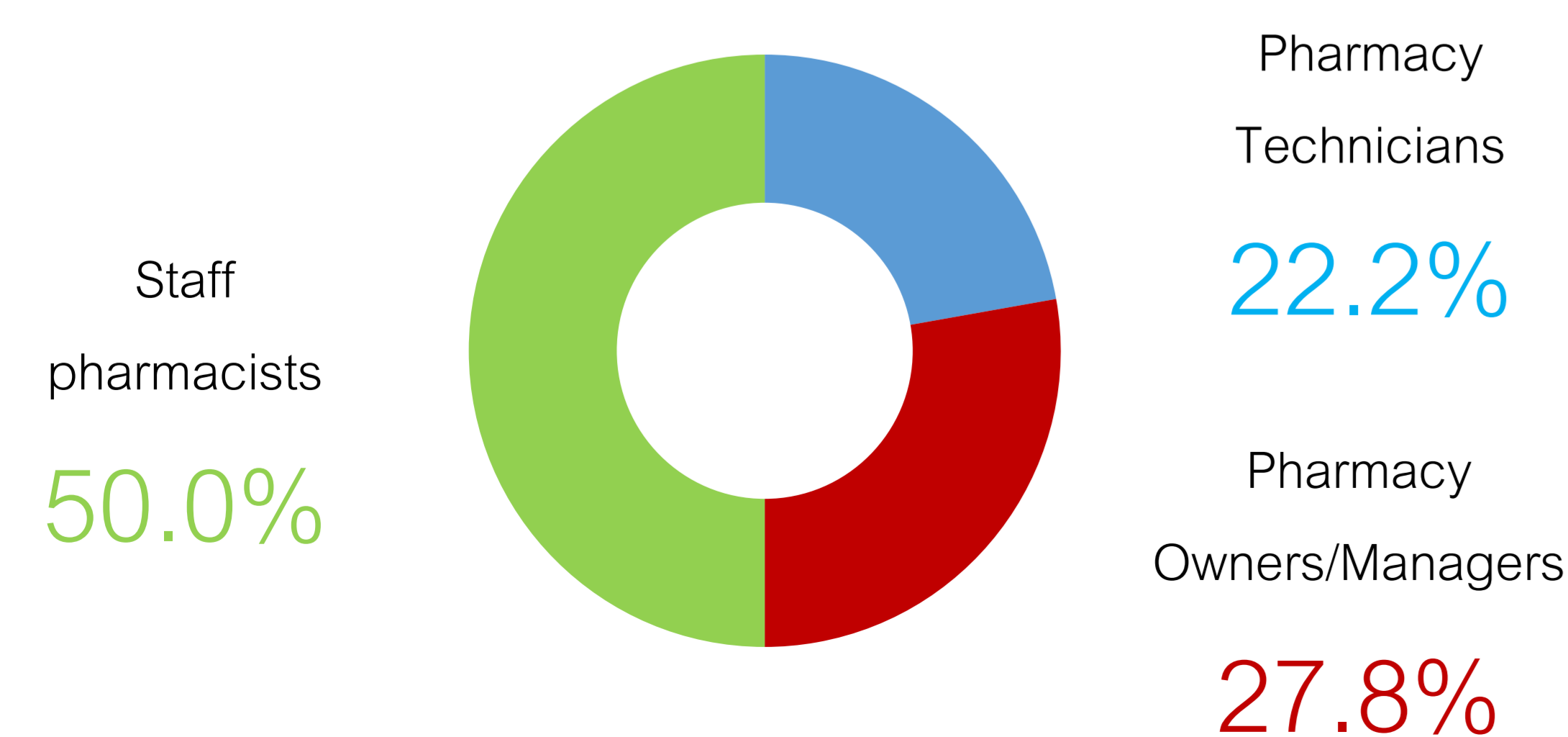
OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study was to explore the current perceptions and attitudes of patient safety culture in Prince Edward Island (PEI) community pharmacies.

METHOD

- We administered a 39-item online questionnaire, adapted from a validated Safety Attitudes Questionnaire (SAQ), to all 213 registered pharmacists and pharmacy technicians who have provided consent to the PEI College of Pharmacists to be contacted for research purposes during their annual registration.
- Responses were collected through a 5-point Likert scale (from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree) and open-ended questions.
- Qualitative thematic analysis and descriptive statistics were conducted on the collected data.

FIGURE 1. Responses from Pharmacy Professionals



RESULTS

- We collected **18 responses** (14 pharmacists and 4 pharmacy technicians) with an overall response rate of **8.45%** (Figure 1).
- Pharmacy professionals:
 - have a fairly positive perception of safety culture and share a **strong sense of teamwork and job satisfaction** (Table 1).
 - share a **strong sense of safety** as 94% of pharmacy professionals "would feel safe being treated [at their respective pharmacy] as a patient" (Table 1).
 - consider **staffing as the greatest challenge** and barrier to improving a culture of safety in their practice, as 47% of participants agreed that the number of staff in their pharmacy was insufficient to handle the number of patients at any given time.
 - agree that management does a **poor job of training new personnel** and present a **need for educational programs** for their pharmacy team members.
 - perceive **fatigue, excessive workload and hostile/emergency situations as less of a barrier** to safety culture than other dimensions of the SAQ.

CONCLUSIONS

- The variations in response to the issue of perception of management as a potential barrier to improving safety culture shows that there is a lack of a standardized, formal management strategy in place.
- The current landscape serves as a reminder that there are areas for improvement in human resources, staffing requirements, as well as training programs for new staff across the province of PEI.
- Resolution of these barriers may contribute to the delivery of safe and quality patient care.

TABLE 1. PHARMACY PROFESSIONALS' PERCEPTION ON SAFETY CULTURE

| Climate Scale | Mean | 100 Point Scale Score* |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Safety | 4.27 | 81.8 |
| I would feel safe being treated here as a patient | 4.76 | 94.0 |
| Medication errors are handled appropriately in this pharmacy | 4.41 | 85.3 |
| I know the proper channels to direct questions regarding patient safety in this pharmacy | 4.65 | 91.3 |
| I receive appropriate feedback about my performance | 4.00 | 75.0 |
| In this pharmacy, it is difficult to discuss errors | 3.94 | 73.5 |
| I am encouraged by others in this pharmacy, to report any patient safety concerns I may have | 4.18 | 79.5 |
| The culture in this pharmacy makes it easy to learn from the errors of others | 3.94 | 73.5 |
| Team Work | 4.22 | 80.5 |
| My input is received well in this pharmacy | 4.42 | 85.5 |
| In this pharmacy, it is difficult to speak up if I perceive a problem with patient care | 4.00 | 75.0 |
| Disagreements in this pharmacy are resolved | 4.28 | 82.0 |
| I have the support I need from others in this pharmacy to care for patients | 4.39 | 84.8 |
| It is easy for personnel here to ask questions when there is something that they do not understand | 4.44 | 86.0 |
| The people in this pharmacy work together as a well-coordinated team | 4.11 | 77.8 |
| Job Satisfaction | 4.14 | 78.5 |
| I like my job | 4.23 | 80.8 |
| Working here is like being part of a large family | 4.12 | 78.0 |
| This pharmacy is a good place to work | 4.41 | 85.3 |
| I am proud to work in this pharmacy | 4.41 | 85.3 |
| Morale in this pharmacy is high | 3.53 | 63.3 |
| Perceptions of Management | 3.82 | 70.5 |
| Management in this pharmacy supports my daily efforts | 4.00 | 75.0 |
| Pharmacy management doesn't knowingly compromise patient safety | 4.23 | 80.8 |
| I get adequate, timely info about events that might affect my work, from pharmacy management | 3.93 | 73.3 |
| The staffing levels in this pharmacy are sufficient to handle the number of patients | 3.12 | 53.0 |
| Working Condition | 3.75 | 68.8 |
| This pharmacy does a good job of training new personnel. | 3.38 | 59.5 |
| All the necessary information for therapeutic decisions is routinely available to me | 3.88 | 72.0 |
| Trainees in this pharmacy are adequately supervised | 3.93 | 73.3 |
| Problem personnel are dealt with constructively by our pharmacy management | 3.81 | 70.3 |
| Stress Recognition | 3.38 | 59.5 |
| When my workload becomes excessive, my performance is impaired | 3.13 | 53.3 |
| I am less effective at work when fatigued | 3.44 | 61.0 |
| I am more likely to make errors in tense or hostile situations | 3.59 | 64.8 |
| Fatigue impairs my performance during emergency situations | 3.30 | 57.5 |

* To calculate the 100 Point Scale Store: ((Mean of the items)-1)x 25)

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