

ADHERENCE TO GUIDELINE RECOMMENDATIONS ON ANTI-HYPERTENSIVE MEDICATION PRESCRIBING BY PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract. Anti-hypertensive medication guidelines are intended to improve health outcomes. We aimed to determine adherence to the Malaysian guidelines by primary care physicians regarding the prescribing of anti-hypertensive medications for hypertensive patients with diabetes mellitus, proteinuria and those aged ≥ 65 years. We retrospectively reviewed medical records of patients who attended a primary care clinic from January to May 2012. One out of every four records of hypertensive patients aged >18 years who had been followed-up for at least a year, were randomly sampled. Records of 1,060 patients were reviewed: 507 subjects (47.8%) had diabetes mellitus and 374 (73.8%) were prescribed renin-angiotensin-system blockers (RAS-blockers). Eighty-six out of 367 subjects tested (23.4%) had proteinuria, of which 46 (53.5%) were prescribed RAS-blockers. All subjects (100%) with diabetes mellitus and proteinuria ($n=65$) were prescribed angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors as per guidelines. Of the 431 patients aged ≥ 65 years, the anti-hypertensive medications prescribed were calcium channel blockers (67.7%), RAS-blockers (52.4%), diuretics (35.5%), beta blockers (31.8%) and alpha blockers (6%). Adherence of primary care physicians to anti-hypertensive medication guidelines was good, but there is still room for improvement in the use of RAS-blockers to treat hypertensive subjects with proteinuria.

Keywords: hypertension, guidelines, primary care, diabetes, proteinuria, older persons, anti-hypertensive agents

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