Knowledge, attitude, and performance of primary healthcare physicians in Aseer Region, Saudi Arabia about attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

Al-Ahmari AA, Bharti RK, Al-Shahrani MS, Alharthi MH, Alqarni HM, Alshehri HM.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND:
Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common psychiatric disorders. This study aimed to assess the knowledge, attitude, and practice of primary health-care (PHC) physicians on diagnosis and management of ADHD.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:
This was a cross-sectional study included 340 PHC physicians in Aseer Region, Saudi Arabia. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data on personal characteristics, knowledge, attitude, and practice of the diagnosis and management of ADHD.

RESULTS:
Nearly 47.6% of the PHC physicians were aged <30 years, 60.3% were male, 79.1% were Saudi nationals, and 84.1% had completed MBBS. Only 13.2% had attended continuing medical education courses on ADHD, 63.2% had read about ADHD; Internet was the main source of information (30.7%). Participants' attitude toward ADHD was mainly positive, while 32.1% had poor knowledge and 17.6% had diagnosed ADHD cases in the last year, but 73.3% had referred the diagnosed cases to specialists. Participants' knowledge differed significantly according to their age, gender, and nationality.

CONCLUSIONS:
PHC physicians' knowledge about ADHD was suboptimal, but they had a positive attitude toward their role with regard to ADHD. PHC physicians should focus on the clinical and diagnostic aspects of ADHD. Awareness and interest of undergraduate medical students and newly graduated physicians in ADHD should be raised. The Ministry of Health should encourage attendance at extracurricular courses and workshops.