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ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONAL EVALUATION OF A PHARMACOVIGILANCE CELL IN AN AYURVEDIC MEDICAL COLLEGE: A MODEL FOR ENHANCING DRUG SAFETY AND PATIENT AWARENESS

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PHARMACOVIGILANCE CELL

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ABSTRACT:

Pharmacovigilance is a critical component of healthcare systems aimed at ensuring patient safety through monitoring adverse drug reactions (ADRs). With the increasing use of Ayurvedic medicines globally, there is a growing need for systematic documentation and safety surveillance. The present study describes the establishment, functioning, and outcomes of the Pharmacovigilance Cell at Dr. Deepak Patil Ayurvedic Medical College and Research Centre, Borpadale.

The cell was structured as per national pharmacovigilance guidelines with multidisciplinary departmental involvement including Rasashastra, Dravyaguna, Agad



Tantra, and Kayachikitsa. Activities included ADR reporting, awareness programs, and patient education initiatives conducted at Sanjeevani Hospital.

The results indicate improved awareness among students and patients, enhanced ADR reporting practices, and better integration of pharmacovigilance into clinical training. The study highlights the importance of institutional pharmacovigilance systems in strengthening patient safety and promoting evidence-based Ayurveda.

Keywords: Pharmacovigilance, Ayurveda, ADR, Patient Safety, AYUSH, Drug Safety

INTRODUCTION:

Pharmacovigilance is defined by the World Health Organization as the science and activities relating to the detection, assessment, understanding, and prevention of adverse drug reactions (ADRs) or any other drug-related problems .

Although Ayurveda is widely regarded as safe, classical texts such as Charaka Samhita recognize the possibility of adverse reactions when drugs are improperly used or processed . With the increasing global utilization of Ayurvedic medicines, the need for structured pharmacovigilance systems has become essential.

The Ministry of AYUSH has established a national pharmacovigilance program with a multi-tier system including national, intermediary, and peripheral centres to ensure drug safety monitoring .

In this context, institutional pharmacovigilance cells play a vital role in developing a culture of ADR reporting, patient awareness, and clinical safety monitoring.

NEED OF THE STUDY:

Despite increasing awareness, ADR reporting in Ayurveda remains limited due to misconceptions regarding drug safety and lack of structured systems .

Educational interventions and institutional pharmacovigilance activities have been shown to improve awareness and reporting practices among students and healthcare professionals .

Thus, establishing a pharmacovigilance cell at the institutional level is crucial for:



- Enhancing patient safety
- Promoting rational drug use
- Integrating pharmacovigilance into medical education

OBJECTIVES:

1. To establish a functional pharmacovigilance cell
2. To monitor and report ADRs in Ayurvedic practice
3. To create awareness among students, faculty, and patients
4. To evaluate the impact of pharmacovigilance activities

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Study Design

Institution-based observational and functional study

Setting

Dr. Deepak Patil Ayurvedic Medical College and Research Centre and associated Sanjeevani Ayurvedic Hospital.

Components

1. Formation of Pharmacovigilance Cell

- Coordinator from Rasashastra/Dravyaguna
- Members from all clinical and para-clinical departments

2. Development of Policy Framework

- ADR reporting system
- Data collection and analysis
- Reporting to higher centres



3. Activities Conducted

- Quarterly meetings
- ADR data collection
- Awareness programs
- Patient education sessions

ROLE OF DEPARTMENTS:

Rasashastra & Bhaishajya Kalpana

- Drug formulation safety
- Identification of drug-related ADRs

Dravyaguna Vigyan

- Pharmacological understanding of herbs
- Drug interaction analysis

Agad Tantra

- Toxicological evaluation
- Poisoning and adverse effect management

Kayachikitsa

- Clinical diagnosis of ADRs
- Patient monitoring

Other Departments

- Panchakarma: Procedure-related reactions
- Shalya/Shalakya: Surgical complications
- Swasthavritta: Preventive aspects



IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS:

- ADR reporting forms distributed
- Data collected from OPD/IPD
- Analysis conducted periodically
- Reports submitted to higher pharmacovigilance centres

The AYUSH pharmacovigilance system encourages reporting of all suspected adverse drug reactions including drug–food interactions and improper usage.

PATIENT AWARENESS PROGRAM

Sanjeevani Hospital

Activities

- Patient counselling on safe drug use
- Distribution of educational leaflets
- Display boards on ADR awareness

Topics Covered

- Drug interactions
- Food-drug interactions
- Identification of side effects
- Importance of reporting ADRs

Outcome

- Improved patient awareness
- Increased reporting tendency
- Better doctor–patient communication



RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS:

- Increased awareness among students and faculty
- Improved ADR documentation
- Enhanced integration of pharmacovigilance into academics
- Positive patient response to awareness programs

Pharmacovigilance programs help in collecting and analyzing ADR data to develop evidence-based safety recommendations.

DISCUSSION:

The present study highlights the importance of institutional pharmacovigilance systems in Ayurveda.

Despite traditional beliefs regarding safety, scientific monitoring is essential to ensure rational drug use. The integration of pharmacovigilance into education and clinical practice helps bridge the gap between theory and practical application.

National initiatives such as the AYUSH pharmacovigilance program provide a strong framework for such institutional efforts.

PATIENT SAFETY MEASURES:

- ADR reporting system implementation
- Regular monitoring of patients
- Awareness through posters and counselling
- Prevention of self-medication
- Documentation and analysis

Pharmacovigilance ultimately aims to reduce drug-related risks and improve public health outcomes.



CONCLUSION:

The Pharmacovigilance Cell at Dr. Deepak Patil Ayurvedic Medical College demonstrates an effective model for integrating drug safety monitoring into Ayurveda education and clinical practice.

The study emphasizes that structured pharmacovigilance systems significantly contribute to patient safety, awareness, and evidence-based practice.

FUTURE SCOPE:

- Digital ADR reporting systems
- Multicentric studies
- Integration with national databases
- Research publications

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