An evaluation of outpatients' attitude towards their long term medication
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Keywords:
outpatient
attitude
long term medication
Hong Kong

Introduction
Non-adherence to medication has been identified as a worldwide public health concern which can reflect inadequate self-management of medication by patients. With a more positive attitude towards their own treatment regimen and a better understanding of their own medication, patients may be more active in managing their disease for a more positive treatment outcome. Understanding of factors that can affect patient's adherence is essential for the development of a better individualized patient education programme. Limited studies have been conducted locally to assess these factors.

Objectives
The objectives of study were to (1) evaluate patients’ habits of taking their medication; (2) examine patients’ view on their medication; (3) determine patients’ understanding of the use of their medication; and (4) investigate the factors which may influence the above.

Methodology
A questionnaire was developed to evaluate patients’ attitude on their medication. Outpatients, older than 18 years old and taking medication more than three months, were recruited at Queen Mary Hospital.

Result
Among the 100 patients recruited, 89% of patients believed that their medication were beneficial. 62% of the patients have tried not taking their medication on time for more than 3 times a month, with the most common reason as intolerable side effects(21%). More patients have tried reducing their doses (30%) than augmenting doses (7%) on purpose by themselves without the consent of doctors. 52% have searched for medication information by themselves and 25% felt that their knowledge was still not enough for managing their disease well. 8% were satisfied with their knowledge with regards to their medication but thought that their knowledge was inadequate for managing their disease well. Concerns of side effect were the primary reason for
non-adherence. Interventions to improve education about their medications and management of potential side effects are recommended for the purpose of preventing the development of fear for side effects and medication non-adherence.