

Challenges and Needs of intern traditional medicine practitioners in Traditional Medicine Teaching Hospitals

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Abstract

Background: Positive experiences during internship training period have led to higher levels of future career satisfaction and enjoyment in the working environment for traditional medicine practitioners. The study was conducted to get in-depth understanding the challenges and needs of intern traditional medicine practitioners who were attending intern trainings at Traditional Medicine Teaching Hospitals in Mandalay and Yangon, for 2017 academic year. The objectives of this study were 1) to identify challenges of intern traditional medicine practitioners in Traditional Medicine Teaching Hospitals and 2) to explore their needs during their internship.

Methods: It was a cross-sectional study applying qualitative data collection method and it was conducted in 2017. Data were collected by conducting focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with 49 interns from Mandalay TMTH (40 intern practitioners) and Yangon TMTH (9 intern practitioners). Five FGD (two male groups and three female groups) and twelve IDI (five male and seven female) were conducted.

Results: On assessing challenges and needs of intern traditional medicine practitioners, the interns felt that their roles and responsibilities were not well defined; they did not get enough clinical experiences and did not have a chance to learn disease management and treatment procedures; they did not have a healthy relationship with patients, colleagues, senior medical practitioners; they needed more facilities during their internship trainings; some wards were not safe for intern practitioners; their salary was low; and their job opportunities were limited.

Conclusion and Recommendations: Findings from this study showed interns faced some challenges and problems and had negative experiences during their internship trainings. Policy makers, hospital administrators and senior medical officers were recommended to make efforts to improve current situations of intern traditional medicine practitioners for their future career satisfaction and enjoyment in the working environment based on these research findings.