

**A Randomized Controlled Trial of Clinical Pharmacists' Interventions to Assist  
Pediatric Patients in Obtaining Discharge Medications**

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**Objectives:** To evaluate the impact of the pharmacists' interventions during the discharge process on 1) patients and their caregivers' (family, legal guardian) likelihood to obtain discharge medications in a timely fashion and 2) caregivers' knowledge of how to correctly administer the medications.

**Design:** Randomized controlled trial.

**Setting:** An urban tertiary care teaching hospital.

**Participants:** Pediatric patients admitted to the general pediatric ward between April 2, 2001 to March 29, 2002.

**Results:** The final analysis included 81 patients in the control group and 91 in the intervention group. Patients in the intervention group were able to obtain medications within 24 hours more often than patients in the control group (84% vs. 69%,  $p= 0.027$ ). Caregivers' knowledge of how to correctly administer medications did not differ statistically between the groups. The number of discharge medications, prescriptions for compounded medications, insurance coverage and residence outside of the state of California appear to affect the ability to obtain medications within 24 hours.

**Conclusions:** Our results suggest that the coordinated efforts of pharmacists' interventions during the discharge process have a positive impact on continuity of care. Our observations may additionally be used to establish criteria for identifying patients at risk for problems with obtaining medications at discharge.