

**A STUDY OF HOUSEHOLD DRUG USE KNOWLEDGE AND
PRACTISES IN RELATION TO DISPENSING INSTRUCTIONS
IN SEME EAST DIVISION OF KISUMU COUNTY**

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**A research project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the
award of bachelor of pharmacy of Mount Kenya University.**

2013

ABSTRACT

Rational Drug Use encompasses factors which include but are not limited to appropriate and adequate patient information and knowledge. There are currently many forms of; inappropriate medicines use practices and contributory underlying factors affecting the rational use of medicines which in turn have grave consequences on treatment outcomes; however the community and consumer perspectives are still not well understood. The main purpose of the study was to assess respondents' knowledge on medication use from the instruction given at the point of dispensation and their impact on the medication use practices at the household level among residents of Seme East division. The methodology of this study was a descriptive retrospective study carried out in East Seme division of Kisumu County with a total of 153 respondents from 153 households being interviewed. According to the study about half of the respondents 49% thought their illness was serious with almost all, 91.3% taking western medicine during their illness. The medicine mainly used included painkillers 36.7% and antibiotics 22% with about 50% of the medicine dispensed in original manufacturer's package and 38.2% as loose tablets/capsules in sealed plastic package. Much as about 11% of the respondents self-prescribed, 52.3% of the prescriptions were from health care workers with respondents mainly obtaining the medicines from health facilities 65.3%. Majority of the respondents 21.9%, cited 'Medicine name & How to take', as package labeling information at dispensation and 'When, how to take, special instructions' as the major focus of medication use counseling. Of the 38.8% respondents who were unable to complete the total medication dosage, the two major cited reason was 'felt better' at 34.1%. 81.2% of the respondents cited having left over medication at home with the most 80.9% of the respondents mentioning that they kept the left over medication for future use. In conclusion, there currently exists an array of inappropriate medication use practices in the community level whose magnitude is currently largely underestimated, not clearly understood, overlooked and not addressed by current dispensing practices. The study therefore currently recommends more research on socio-cultural factors influencing rational medication use and feasible interventions to address the irrational drug use from the consumer's perspective.