

Evidence plays limited role in OTC decision making

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(HealthDay)—For pharmacy graduates and tutors, evidence seems to play a limited role in over-the-counter decision making, according to a study published online Dec. 11 in the *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*.

Peter McKee, M.Pharm., from Queen's University Belfast in the United Kingdom, and colleagues conducted semi-structured interviews with pharmacy graduates ([trainees](#)) and pharmacist tutors to explore their views on the importance of evidence when making decisions about over-the-counter medicines. Interviews were conducted with 12 trainees and 11 tutors.

The researchers found that (in)consistency and contradiction, confidence, acculturation, and continuation and perpetuation were the main themes that emerged. The evidence-based approach did not seem

to be routinely or consistently implemented, although participants reported having an awareness of its importance and potential benefits. Personal use and patient feedback were the main reasons for confidence in products. Participants justified a lack of discussion about evidence based on not wanting to lessen patient confidence in requested products or negating the placebo effect. As trainees acculturated to real-life practice, they deemed university teaching and evidence as less relevant than meeting customer expectations. Tutors' actions were mirrored by their trainees, resulting in perpetuation of similar attitudes and behaviors.

"More work could be performed to investigate how [evidence](#) can be regarded as relevant and something that is consistently implemented in practice," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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