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National Pharmacy Practice Programs at Ministry of Health in Saudi Arabia

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Introduction

Pharmacy Education had been started in Saudi Arabia in 1959, and included Clinical Pharmacy in the pharmacy curriculum in 1976 at college of pharmacy in King Saud University, then changed to Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm. D) degree as clinical pharmacy education in early 2010s [1-3]. Over more than 40 years; the colleges of pharmacy expanded to more than twenty and graduate almost more than 600 pharmacists per year with a bachelor degree of pharmacy and doctor of pharmacy [4,5]. Two hospital pharmacies started pharmacy practice and clinical pharmacy services; King Faisal Special Hospital and Research Center in mid-1970s [6], and King Khalid University Hospital in early 1980s [7,8], and one Hospital Pharmacy started at Ministry of Health in Riyadh region at Riyadh Central Hospital, the old name of King Saud Medical City in late 1980s, in addition to the hospital pharmacy in Dhahran. Health Center of Saudi Arabia Aramco Medical Services Organization, which is a part of the Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) [9,10]. In early 1990s Two Military Hospital Pharmacies at King Abdul-Aziz Medical city, and Prince Sultan Military Medical City started applying pharmacy practice and providing clinical pharmacy services. The pharmacy practice and clinical pharmacies services expanded quickly after sending several candidates to USA for studying Pharm. D and opening several colleges of pharmacies in mid-2000s. Several Studies had been published describing hospital pharmacy practice and clinical pharmacy services, however they did not differentiated between Ministry of health hospitals or Non- MOH hospitals or private hospital or even Military or National guard or university hospitals; in addition the studies described selected services without focusing on any specialized services. For instant; Intravenous admixture or inpatient pharmacy not discussed, and neither complete specialized clinical pharmacy practice programs, and did not mention any definition or how to start of clinical pharmacy program [11-13].

Plan

Ministry of Health (MOH) founded in 1951 in Saudi Arabia, with a mission stated "provision of healthcare at all levels, promotion

of general health and prevention of diseases, in addition to developing the laws and legislations regulating both the governmental and private health sectors. Aside from that, MOH is accountable for performance monitoring in health institutions, along with the research activity and academic training in the field of health investment" [14,15]. MOH established strategic plan 2010-2020 [16,17]. This plan was implemented to cover 268 MOH Hospital Pharmacies; more than 2250 Primary care centres Pharmacies, 136 Privates Hospital Pharmacies, and more than 7000 community pharmacies through different MOH general administrations, and General Administration of Pharmaceutical Care of Ministry of Health (GAPD-MOH) among them to implement pharmaceutical care [18,19]. GAPD-MOH had mission statement "To provide the best pharmaceutical and clinical care in high quality, modern technology, and the most reasonably-priced cost for the patients of the MOH's facilities"[20]. It had strategic plan for ten years that's including Five General Strategic Goals, Provide Complete Pharmaceutical Care with Safety and Best Practice, Develop and Implement Pharmacy Human Resources, Provide Complete Pharmacy Electronic Services, Establish Innovation and Encouragement Culture at All Pharmacy sitting, and Best Utilization Resources based on Pharmacoeconomics and Health Economics Strategies. Those Goals are consisting of fifteen Initiatives, and eighty three Projects. Each project was initiated by assessment needs, key performance indicators, gap analysis, and then action plan for this project, central and peripheral committees and to be completed after five years

Currently GAPD-MOH is running more than thirty national pharmacy practices and clinical pharmacy program offers through MOH hospitals, primary care centers, and private hospitals adults and Pediatrics patients. Those Programs are but not limited to Antimicrobial Stewardship Program, Pain Management Program, Drug Information Services, Pharmacy Home Care Program, and Pediatric Pharmacy Program etc.

During this journey, we gained a lot of experiences, and facing lots of challenges, we could overcome it while the program is running smoothly, expanding very quickly and good achievement [21,22]. We wish to explore what had been done during the journey by writing several topics in the coming issues and but not limited to the following:

- ✓ Antimicrobial Stewardship Program
- ✓ Pharmacy Infection Control
- ✓ Pain Management Program
- ✓ Anticoagulation Program
- ✓ Drug Information Services
- ✓ Nutrition Support Pharmacy
- ✓ Oncology Pharmacy Program
- ✓ IV Therapy Program
- ✓ Pharmacy Home Care Program
- ✓ Drug Utilization Evaluation Program
- ✓ Emergency Pharmacy Program
- ✓ Pharmacy Public Health Program
- ✓ Mass Gathering Pharmaceutical Care
- ✓ Nephrology Pharmacy Program
- ✓ Pediatric Pharmacy Program

Pharmacy Practice or Clinical Pharmacy Programs are very Essential to decrease and prevent drug misadventure, improve patients outcome, and avoidable of extra and unnecessary cost in health care system.

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