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Poster Session | Treatment and control

The potential for successful delivery of ACT through Licensed Chemical Sellers in Ghana [MIM16729295]

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Licensed Chemical Sellers (LCS) are often the first point of call for persons seeking medical care in Ghana. There are currently no clear policies on their role in health services delivery, however, there is an increasing interest in using them for managing malaria in the community. Objectives: To determine the knowledge and practices of LCS for management of malaria and to better understand how to use their full potential, and to inform the ongoing policy dialogue. Structured questionnaires were administered to a regionally representative sample of LCS in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. 161 randomly selected LCS were interviewed. Most LCS had secondary or technical school education (77.1%). Their shops were often located in urban areas (77%) and served more than 20 clients a day (78.3%). All shops sold anti-malarial drugs but only 40% stocked Artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT). Nearly all LCS knew the correct symptoms and signs for malaria but only 38.0% knew the approved treatment to be ACT. Initial training of prospective LCS by the Pharmacy Council was inadequate, their monitoring was infrequent and their tenure was short-lived. LCS and health sector managers alike realise the need for adequate training and other forms of support. LCS contribute significantly to management of malaria in Ghana, but realising their full potential to provide timely and safe treatment requires more focused training, financial and material support, regular monitoring, and an enabling policy environment.