2009-10 AANP National NP Sample Survey:
Prescribing

Introduction

In late 2009 and early 2010, the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) completed the 2009-10 AANP National Nurse Practitioner Sample Survey. The purpose of this survey was to identify the characteristics and practices of nurse practitioners (NPs), and the survey included a number of questions on NP prescribing. This report describes basic findings on prescribing; articles with further detail on survey results are forthcoming in the *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners*.

Methods

An email invitation including a link to the online 2009-10 National Nurse Practitioner Sample Survey was sent to a stratified random sample of 25,000 NPs. AANP also mailed the sample the six-page paper survey and an explanatory coversheet. The sample was drawn from the AANP National NP Database, which documented essentially the universe of NPs in the United States. At the time the sample was selected, the database contained approximately 135,000 individual NPs recognized to practice in the United States; thus, the sample represented 18.5% of the total NP population. In order to maximize participation by practicing NPs, the stratified random sample was limited to NPs who indicated that they practiced clinically in the 2007 or 2008 AANP National NP Practice Site Survey. The sample was further stratified to reflect the clinical specialty distribution of the overall NP population. Completed surveys were returned by 13,562 practicing NPs (56.4% response rate). This report is limited to the NP respondents who were in active clinical NP practice; therefore, respondents who returned surveys who were not currently practicing were not included in analyses.

Results

Almost all respondents (97.6%) indicated that they prescribed pharmacologic agents for patients. Respondents across all settings and specialties wrote an average of 19.3 prescriptions per day. Those respondents in full-time practice (35 hours or more per week) wrote an average of 22 prescriptions per day. Table 1 includes the top 15 agents prescribed by respondents regularly, or more than 15 times per week. The drugs most commonly prescribed included antihypertensives (27.3%), antimicrobials (27.1%), and dyslipidemic agents (22.7%).

Most NPs in all specialties prescribe (see Table 2). Family NPs were the most likely to prescribe, while neonatal NPs were the least likely to prescribe. Likewise, family NP respondents averaged the most prescriptions written per day, while neonatal NPs wrote the fewest prescriptions per day.

67.1% of respondents consulted with their pharmacist at least monthly (see Table 3). 92.7% of respondents found their pharmacists moderately or very helpful.

Respondents were asked where they obtained information on new drugs, and they most frequently identified continuing education activities and journal articles. Table 4 displays the frequency of other identified sources.

A more in-depth analysis of NP prescribing data will be published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners*. This article will describe prescribing by variables such as community size, practice setting, and subspecialty. This article will also present common drugs prescribed by NPs and the frequency at which they are prescribed.

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Table 1 Top Agents Prescribed Regularly by NPs

	Percentage of Respondents
Antihypertensives	27.3
Antimicrobials	27.1
Dyslipidemic agents	22.7
Diabetic agents	21.8
Analgesic NSAIDs	19.7
Vaccines/immunizations	19.2
Diuretics	17.7
Bronchodilators	17.4
Contraceptives	16.1
GERD/PUD agents	16.0
Vitamins/nutritional agents	14.0
Analgesics, other	14.0
Analgesic Narcotics	13.9
Antihistamines	12.2
Antidepressants	12.1

Table 2 Prescribing, by Specialty

	Percentage Prescribing	*Average # Prescriptions/Day*
Acute Care	98.0	17.8
Adult	97.2	18.1
Family	98.5	23.5
Gerontological	95.6	14.1
Neonatal	90.8	5.2
Pediatric	96.8	14.0
Psych/Mental Health	96.0	20.7
Women's Health	97.5	19.3

Table 3 Frequency of Pharmacist Consultation

	Percentage of Respondents
Daily	6.9
Weekly	30.3
Monthly	29.9
Once or twice a year	29.7
Never	3.2

Table 4 Sources of Information on New Drugs

	Percentage of Respondents
Continuing education activities	84.9
Journal articles	75.3
Colleagues	65.7
Pharmaceutical representatives	54.6
Packaged product information	46.6
Pharmacists	42.8
Journal advertisements	33.5
Media	17.8
Direct to consumer advertisements	14.9