**Title: Paracetamol prescription use—prescribing habits of Swedish healthcare providers**

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**Background:** Paracetamol, available globally for over half a century, is prescribed for a range of pain conditions.

**Aims:** To assess paracetamol prescribing habits in Sweden.

**Method:** A structured, algorithm-driven survey was conducted in Jan–Feb 2016 by phone with a randomly selected, geographically representative sample of Swedish general practitioners (GPs; n=75), specialists (n=50), and district nurses (n=25). Specialists were general surgeons (n=10), orthopaedic surgeons (n=10), gynecologists (n=10), and pain (n=10) or anaesthesia/intensive care specialists (n=10).

**Results:** GPs, specialists, and nurses saw a median of 80, 98, and 40 adult patients/month with acute or chronic pain, accounting for 33%, 52%, and 20% of their patients. Pain was most often chronic and of moderate intensity. GPs, specialists, and nurses said 50%, 61%, and 60% of their pain patients, respectively, were prescribed paracetamol. New prescriptions by GPs were most often for back pain (27%) and arthritis (24%), by specialists for postoperative pain (20%) and cancer (18%), and by nurses for back (13%) and joint pain (13%). Modified-release (MR) paracetamol 665mg was the paracetamol formulation of choice for GPs and specialists, who both chose this formulation >50% of the time for chronic pain and >30% and >40% of the time, respectively, for acute pain; nurses had no clear preference for paracetamol formulation. Advantages perceived by GPs, specialists, and nurses for MR paracetamol 665mg included long-acting effect (57%, 42%, 60%), tolerability (40%, 33%, 0%), dosage (25%, 31%, 40%), and efficacy (23%, 25%, 35%). Some GPs, specialists, and nurses perceived no disadvantages (35%, 50%, 40%) with MR paracetamol; others mentioned risk of overdose (13%, 17%, 30%) or hepatic side effects (13%, 15%, 0%).

**Conclusion:** Swedish healthcare providers prescribe paracetamol for ≥50% of patients with pain; at the time of the survey, MR paracetamol was the formulation most widely prescribed by GPs and specialists.

**Brief Summary:** A survey of Swedish healthcare providers revealed that they prescribe paracetamol for more than half of their patients with acute/chronic pain, and that GPs and specialists prefer modified-release paracetamol 665mg over other formulations.

Author conflicts of interest: KS and PKB are employees of Consumer Healthcare R & D, GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare, Singapore

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