

Original Article

**Ototoxicity monitoring in general medical practice: Exploring perceptions and practices of general practitioners about drug-induced auditory symptoms**

Khoza Katijah-Shangase<sup>1\*</sup> and Jina<sup>2</sup>,

<sup>1</sup>Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology, School of Human and Community Development, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology, School of Human and Community Development, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

**Abstract**

**Background:** The general practitioner is predominantly responsible for offering comprehensive health care to every individual seeking medical care, and ototoxicity being a consequence of major life threatening treatments falls within this scope of practice. This research study aimed to determine the perceptions of general practitioners in the Gauteng region, regarding ototoxicity monitoring and its management in general medical practice. **Method:** A total of 28 general practitioners participated in this study. Participants were recruited from private practices and state hospitals in Gauteng, South Africa. The researchers employed a cross sectional survey design utilising paper-based self-administered questionnaires with the use of a qualitative and quantitative analysis paradigm, utilising content analysis and descriptive statistics. **Results:** General practitioners are aware of the cardinal ototoxicity symptoms as a consequence of ototoxicity medication. The majority of general practitioners have easy access to audiological services, however not all utilise these services. General practitioners in this study were aware of ototoxicity monitoring strategies however they do not carry them out diligently, as they feel that patients' medical diagnosis takes priority over the ototoxicity risk factors and they feel it is not feasible to monitor every patient on ototoxicity treatment. **Conclusion:** The findings from this study indicated that even though general practitioners are aware of their role in ototoxicity monitoring, they do not appear to carry out monitoring strategies for various reasons and hence there is a need for increased emphasis on the importance of their role in ototoxicity monitoring, and a clear need for audiologists to work closely with the general practitioners. Protocols and ototoxicity monitoring programs need to be established and implemented to contribute toward efficacious patient care.

**Keywords:** Ototoxicity, General Practitioners, Sensorineural Hearing Loss, Ototoxicity Monitoring, Tinnitus.

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**\*Corresponding Author: Prof. Katijah Khoza-Shangase**, Box 57 Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology, School of Human and Community Development, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa 2050 **Email:** [Katijah.Khoza@wits.ac.za](mailto:Katijah.Khoza@wits.ac.za)