

Peer Review Report

Review Report on Exploring Patient Pathways and Care Situations in Men with Erectile Dysfunction in Different PDE-5 Inhibitor Regulatory Settings

Original Article, Int. J. Public Health

Reviewer: Daniela Grekova-Kafalova

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EVALUATION

Q 1 Please summarize the main findings of the study.

The main findings of the study can be summarized as: 1. The authors have collected comprehensive data on the prevalence of erectile dysfunction (ED) and the behavior of men in dealing with ED. 2. They also investigated whether access to PDE-5is, based on varying prescription requirements, impacted the care and treatment of men affected by ED. 3. Compared countries with different prescribing regulation (Rx, OTC, and Pharmacist prescribing, where it is legislatively regulated) in different countries to access regulatory approaches in terms of benefits and risks for patients with ED.

Q 2 Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

This study provides valuable insights into the burden and self-reported impact of erectile dysfunction (ED) across different populations. However, several limitations should be acknowledged when interpreting the findings. The analysis was based on data from a limited number of countries, which may constrain the generalizability of the results. Additionally, cultural diversity and differences in healthcare systems across regions may have influenced treatment behaviors and quality of life outcomes. The reliance on self-reported data through questionnaires introduces the possibility of response bias, particularly in relation to sensitive topics such as sexual performance. This could have led to an underestimation of the true prevalence and severity of ED. Furthermore, the use of a digital platform, while practical, may have affected participation rates and data accuracy due to factors such as digital accessibility, internet literacy, and the nature of online interactions. To enhance the reliability and representativeness of future research, strategies should be implemented to minimize these uncertainties, validate self-reported outcomes, and ensure broader inclusivity in participant recruitment. Addressing these methodological challenges will contribute to a more accurate understanding of the disease burden and support the development of effective healthcare strategies. A major strength of this study is the opportunity to investigate the accessibility of pharmaceutical products used for erectile dysfunction, as well as the impact of prescription practices on their consumption. Additionally, the inclusion of various channels for acquiring PDE-5is—so-called/ "black market" adds an interesting dimension to the research.

Q 3 Please provide your detailed review report to the authors. The editors prefer to receive your review structured in major and minor comments. Please consider in your review the methods (statistical methods valid and correctly applied (e.g. sample size, choice of test), is the study replicable based on the method description?), results, data interpretation and references. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

The authors have selected appropriate methods and questionnaires to address the study objectives. However, several questions arise regarding whether all generic pharmaceutical products containing sildenafil, tadalafil, vardenafil, and avanafil were included, or only certain representatives of the group. Additionally, is there a correlation between the prescribing regimen and the value of the black market?

Additionally, what types of products do these patients purchase from the black market — pharmaceutical drugs or dietary supplements — and how is it possible that an analysis of this market was not conducted? Is it even feasible to do so?

In some figures, the font size is too small, which makes the text unclear and difficult to read. This issue needs to be corrected.

PLEASE COMMENT

Q 4 Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?

Yes, it is.

Q 5 Are the keywords appropriate?

Yes, they are.

Q 6 Is the English language of sufficient quality?

In some places, the English could be improved, but overall the text is written in accessible and understandable language for the audience, without major errors.

Q 7 Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

No.

Q 8 Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?)

No answer given.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Q 9 Originality



Q 10 Rigor



Q 11 Significance to the field



Q 12 Interest to a general audience



Q 13 Quality of the writing



Q 14 Overall scientific quality of the study



REVISION LEVEL

Q 15 Please make a recommendation based on your comments:

Minor revisions.