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### MEETING ABSTRACT

#### A5.5

##### **Prevalence and predictors of self-medication among medical and pharmacy students**

Ana TOMAS<sup>1</sup>, Nebojša PAVLOVIĆ<sup>2</sup>, Milica PAUT KUSTURICA<sup>1</sup>, Olga HORVAT<sup>1</sup>, Slavica LAZAREVIĆ<sup>1</sup>, Zdenko TOMIĆ<sup>1</sup> and Ana SABO<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Pharmacology, Toxicology and Clinical Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Novi Sad, Serbia;*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Medicine, University of Novi Sad, Serbia*

**Background:** Self-medication is considered common among prospective health care professionals. Attitudes towards conventional and complementary medicine may affect their future pharmacotherapy practice. The aim of this research was to determine attitudes and prevalence of self-medication among population of first and final year medicine and pharmacy students.

**Methods:** Research was performed as a cross-sectional study at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Novi Sad, and included 192 first and last year students of medicine and pharmacy. Students filled out a demographic and self-medication questionnaire created for the purpose of this research.

**Results:** Self-medication was reported by 81.3% students. The most frequently self-prescribed medications were conventional drugs. Independent risk factors for self-medication identified in the logistic regression analysis were last year of studies (OR 7.29, 95%-C.I.: 2.28–22.90), living alone (OR 3.46, 95%-C.I.: 1.44–8.34) and consumption of cigarettes (OR 8.55, 95%-C.I.: 1.05–69.38). Last year students had more confidence in conventional medicine compared to herbal drugs, and had better knowledge about safety and risks of co-administration of herbal and conventional drugs.

**Discussion:** Results are in accordance with the study conducted at the University in Ljubljana, as well as studies in other countries, where students of the final year were more inclined towards self-medication, probably due to better knowledge acquired through studies and higher degree of confidence. However, this practice is not risk-free. Self-medication may result in irrational drug use, delayed seeking of medical advice, and increased side effects. Self-medication is an important issue among the population of medical students, especially among final year students. No difference in attitudes and behavior was found in relation to study program.

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\*Corresponding author e-mail: [ana.tomas@mf.uns.ac.rs](mailto:ana.tomas@mf.uns.ac.rs)