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CENTRALIZED PREPARATION OF METHOTREXATE SYRINGES: A COST CONTROL OPTION BETWEEN PRIMARY CARE PHARMACY AND HOSPITAL PHARMACY.

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OBJECTIVE

Our aim was develop a collaboration program between the Hospital Pharmacy Department and Primary Health Care to guarantee a safe procedure, suitability of prescriptions, adherence to treatment, an appropriate waste management and a saving opportunity.

METHODS

- From February 2011 to August 2013, all the medical charts of rheumatologic patients with subcutaneous methotrexate were reviewed and prescriptions were validated.
- Pharmacy Department carried out the preparation and labelling of the syringes in a cytostatic safety cabinet and the department courier service distributed them to all Primary Health Care clinics.
- Every office was provided with cytostatic waste bins.

RESULTS

- Hospital pharmacist validated prescriptions for 147 different patients (medium: 68.4 patients/month).
- During the study period → 8434 syringes were prepared
918 doses (10.8 %) were individualized doses.
- Average cost of commercialized syringe → 26 Euros.
- Theoretical cost with commercialized syringe → 227420 Euros.
- Real cost of the 3655 vials of methotrexate used → 4898 Euros.
- Cost of technician pharmacy for preparing syringes → 2508 Euros.
- This program offer an estimated budget saving for the Health Department of 220014 Euros.

DISCUSSION

- Many rheumatologic patients have a chronic treatment with low-dose subcutaneous methotrexate. Commercialized methotrexate syringes are available in limited dosages.
- There is evidence of health risks from reconstitution and handling of methotrexate vials at the specialist office or at Primary Health Care clinics.

CONCLUSION

An important saving can be obtained with a central program of elaboration of methotrexate syringes for all the patients of Health Department.