

A COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL STRATEGY ADDRESSING GUIDANCE ON SAFE HANDLING OF HAZARDOUS DRUGS

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BACKGROUND

Occupational exposure to hazardous drugs (HDs) is a mounting public health concern. Nevertheless, there are not harmonized standards for the prevention of HDs exposure, currently .

PURPOSE

To implement a **comprehensive regional strategy (CRS)** addressing **guidance on safe handling** of HDs in order to **minimize healthcare workers' exposure** based on the **harmonization of safety standards and practices** among hospitals.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A **32-item online questionnaire** about general information, preparation, and administration of HDs was carried out to **investigate current situation of training and awareness among workers of 34 regional public hospitals (RPH)**.



A **multidisciplinary work team**, involving **40 health professionals** (including **hospital pharmacists, oncology nurses, occupational medicine professionals and warehouse logistics managers**) from 14 different hospitals, was formed in 2017 to formally **achieve consensus** on management of HDs.



A **formal education plan** was implemented providing **online and face-to-face train-the-trainer courses** to all health professionals involved in the preparation and administration of HDs.



RESULTS

Survey results showed **heterogeneous procedures** concerning **NIOSH Table 1 drugs** and **gaps in training and in awareness** regarding handling of the other HDs.



APRIL 2018

CRS's presentation at the **European Parliament** during the **conference** named "*The problem of HDs in the healthcare sector in Europe*".



So far, **413 training-trainers** have completed the formal education plan and **4155 healthcare workers** have finished online training courses.

JANUARY 2018

Publication of the first formal European framework establishing mandatory practice standards on safe handling of HDs for 34 RPH.

- Creation of **HDs' Committees** in each hospital
- Monographic annexes on **closed-system transfer devices** and **personal protective equipments**.
- **Recommendations** related to **drug preparation, administration and reception**.



CONCLUSIONS

Protection from HDs exposure depends on adherence to safety programs, as well as other factors. A **comprehensive approach** based on the **harmonization of safety standards**, the **engagement in safety culture** and **appropriate practice techniques** among hospitals could **minimize worker exposure to HDs**.

