TELEPHARMACY IN ONCO-HEMATOLOGIC PATIENTS: A SEVEN MONTH EXPERIENCE

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Background and importance
Telepharmacy delivers pharmaceutical care services from a distance through information and communication technologies, avoiding patient attendance to the hospital. Until now, our hospital Onco-hematology Pharmacy Unit dispensed oral and subcutaneous treatments only in person. These onco-hematologic patients are usually a very fragile population.

Aim and objectives
To describe the telepharmacy system for onco-hematological patients implemented at our hospital and its results in terms of activity and patient satisfaction.

Material and methods
In collaboration with medical services and supported by the hospital management staff, onco-hematologic patients with oral or subcutaneous drugs prescribed and at least one the following criteria were included:

- medical consultation through telemedicine,
- chronic stable disease with good adherence
- pediatric hematologic patients whose dose adjustments require laboratory results.

A separated room with computer, mobile phone, webcam and headphones was set up. One oncology pharmacist and one pharmacy technician were allocated part time. Delivery of the dispensed treatment to the patient was arranged through community pharmacies and their regular distributor. Confidentiality was warranted through all the delivery process.

After a seven-month experience, number patients attended and a satisfaction survey enquiring about the service grading several items from 1 (very unsatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied) to a sample of 40 patients was made. Patients subject of surveig were randomly selected by date of attendance (last day of the month from june to september) until reaching 40 suveys answered.

Results
During this period, 8,494 patients were attended in the Onco-hematology Pharmacy Unit. 19,8% (1,681), an average of 10 patients per day, were through telepharmacy.

Out of the 40 patients enquired:

- 88,4% were very satisfied with the information received about their treatment during the telematic pharmaceutical consultation,
- 95,3% were very satisfied with the confidentiality maintained during the telematic pharmaceutical consultation,
- 90,7% were very satisfied with the conditioning of the medication for delivery
- 93% were very satisfied with the overall experience.

The lowest grade obtained in the overall responses was a single puntuation of 3 in the conditioning item.

Conclusion and relevance
According to the results obtained, telepharmacy in onco-hematologic patients is a high value practice that fills the need of these selected patients and it is highly considered by them.