IMPROVEMENTS IN WARD PHARMACY MANAGEMENT BY PHARMACEUTICAL STAFF

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Objectives

In the University Hospital Basel (UHB) as well as in many other Swiss Hospitals the ward pharmacies are managed by nursing teams according to a survey conducted by the Swiss Association of Public Health Administration and Hospital Pharmacists (GSASA). But the logistical process of drug delivery is not the primary goal of the nurses. Therefore it was discussed whether the management of the ward pharmacies could be overtaken by a team of the hospital pharmacy. It was the aim of the study to create a leaner and more efficient process. Mainly the expenditure of time for the nursing and the pharmacy teams were assessed. Furthermore, the financial impact was analyzed.

Methods

The introduced ward pharmacy service included the optimization of the drug dispensary once in the beginning, the order of the drugs and finally the stock placement after the delivery four times a week as well as the control of the expiry dates once a month. After the introduction of the service in four different wards at the UHB a financial evaluation was done using our ERP system SAP. Additionally we registered the required time for the nursing team with or without the ward pharmacy service.

Results

The ward pharmacy management by the hospital pharmacy clearly reduced the effort for the nursing team by five hours per week (reduction for order of 58%, for stock placement of 85% and for the expiry date control of 100%) [Tab. 1]. On the other side the same time had to be invested by the pharmacy team.

Reduction of effort for the nursing team:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Effort reduction by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Order</td>
<td>~58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock placement</td>
<td>~85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expiry date control</td>
<td>~100%</td>
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</table>

Tab. 1 Effort reduction for the nursing team

We could also achieve a reduction of the number of packages delivered between 14% and 19% [Tab. 2], and the sales volume could be reduced between 4% and 54% [Tab. 2]. Furthermore, we achieved substantial cost savings in an overall reduction of the drug dispensary value by 7.3% (5'600 CHF eq. 4'800 €) [Fig. 1].

Finally the medication safety was improved by a better arrangement and knowledge of the stock and a systematic refill with less out of stock [Fig. 2].

Discussion

The ward pharmacy management by pharmaceutical staff was a big success which resulted in a positive feedback by the nursing team and in a substantial financial benefit. With an average of 24% reduction of the drug sales per ward and 17% in the number of packages there is an important benefit concerning a reduction of the drug expenditure as well as a reduced effort for the nursing team.

Conclusions

This study showed that ward pharmacy management by pharmaceutical staff brought some benefits. But long term analysis are needed on different wards to confirm these results. In future also further tasks which could be done by the pharmaceutical staff as the unit dose preparation for each single patient should be evaluated to show their possible benefits. Additionally an expansion of our existing services on more wards is planned.

Acknowledgements

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