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SHORTAGES OF MEDICINES IN HOSPITAL: RESULTS OF A SURVEY ON THE PERCEPTION OF HEALTH WORKERS IN THE WARDS VSV REAL WORLD

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Background

Medicine shortages in Italy are an increasing phenomenon with significant impacts on clinical activity.

Objective

The aim of the work is to analyze the phenomenon, creating monitoring methods that can support the health workers (HW) involved in the problem.

Material and methods

The Hospital Pharmacy (HP) has developed a survey for the HW aiming to determine which kind of drugs most subject to unavailability, the incidence, the average duration of the phenomenon, the approach used in managing any criticality, the impact and relevance on clinical practice.

Results

59 HW from 14 different departments were interviewed. The classes of drugs more reported are: antibiotics (38.0%), corticosteroids (10.6%), gastroprotectors (8.8%), antihypertensives (7.1%), benzodiazepines and psychostimulants (5.2%), nutritional (4.4%), antihistamines (4.4%), blood products (3.5%), biological (2.6%), others (14.8%). In the 88% the shortages, at least one medicine in the reference period (12 months) was reported, with an average duration of 2-8 weeks. 34% of the respondents stated that the shortage of drugs had a negative impact, namely: the effect was perceived as very relevant in 5.9% of the reporter cases, since the HW have to wait for Italian Medicines agency (AIFA) *Nulla Osta* for parallel importation, relevant in 41.2% of cases, as HW had to wait for the HP to obtain supplies. In the remaining 52.9%, the impact was judged minor due to the presence of alternative therapeutic solutions. Specifically, in 11.4% of cases a generic medicine was prescribed, based on the same active substance (AS) but with a different pharmaceutical form (8.6%) or different dosage (14.3%), and in the remaining 65.7% a medicine containing a different AS. The 17% of HW states that the deficiency has never been solved, as in the case of Oxacillin 1G vials, Ceftazidima 2G vials, Lysine acetylsalicylate 500mg vials, Danazol 200mg tablets.

Conclusions

The data collected confirm that the phenomenon of shortages is growing, highlighting the classes of medicines that are to be monitored to prevent the phenomenon. The tool used may be useful for the improvement of the activity and efficiency of HP, with the aim of reducing the negative effects on daily clinical activity through the constant comparison between HW and HP.



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