

DRUG EXCHANGE NETWORK

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Background and importance

Technology plays a crucial role in the optimization of resources, allowing the interconnection between centers and professionals, facilitating savings strategies with great economic impact on health, such as the exchange of drugs that are not being used in the hospital where they are to another center that can use them, thus avoiding economic loss due to expiration.

Aim and objectives

Describing the process of making exchanges of underused medicines carried out between the Pharmacy Department (PD) of the public hospitals of a region in Spain, before (pre-web phase; December 2016-October 2020) and after (web phase; November 2020-September 2021) implementing a website for that purpose.

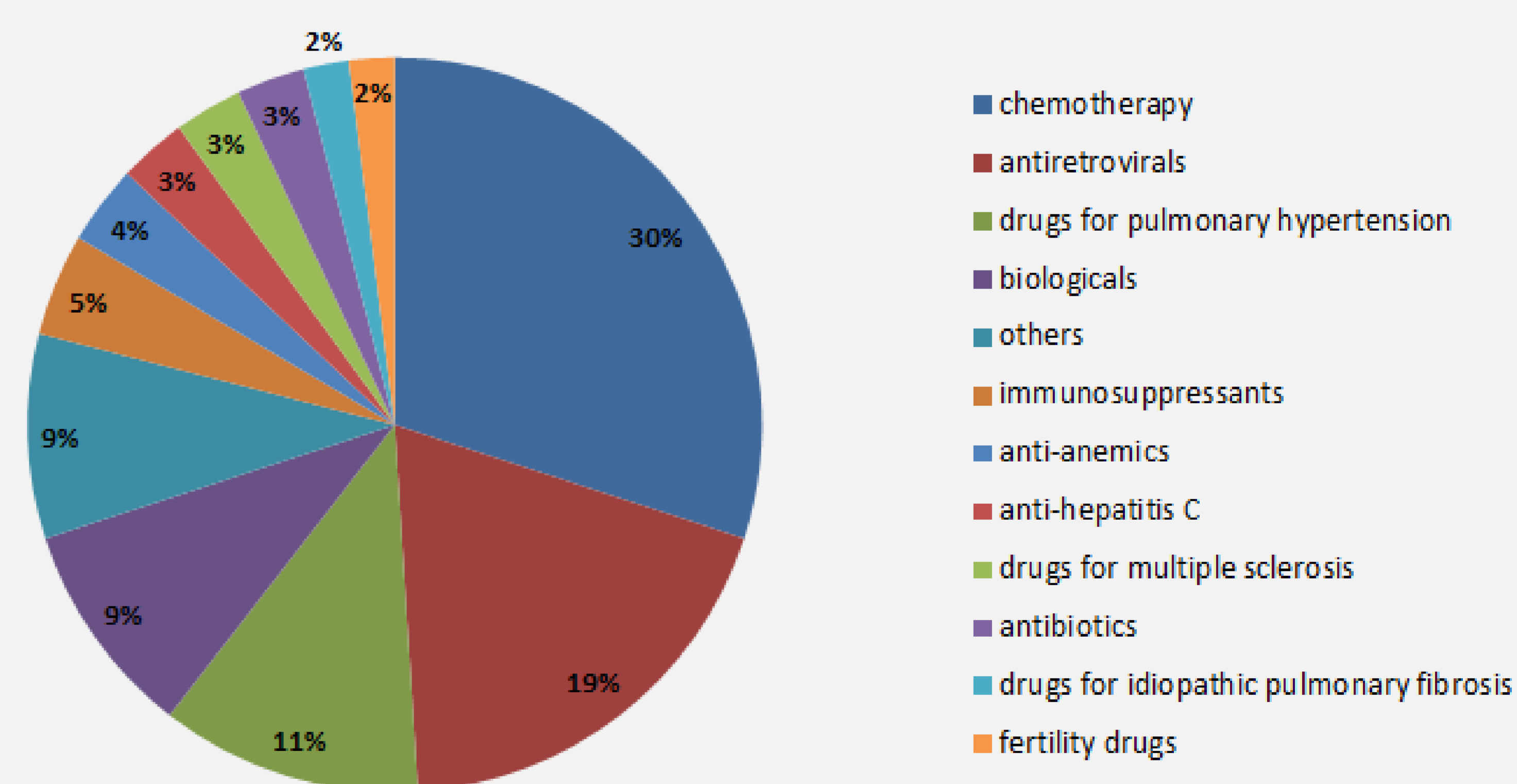
Material and methods

In November 2020, a private financing web was implemented for the exchange of medicines between PD from hospitals in a vast region of Spain. Before this, users of the different hospitals contacted each other through mailing lists where they offered the medicines (presentation, pharmaceutical form, units, batch and expiration) that were available for exchange.

Results

17 hospitals are registered on the web (2 belonging to the private health network). Of all of them, 12 hospitals are operating on the web, carrying out drug exchanges. Total amount saved to the regional health system amounts to €430,783.28 from the start of the project; corresponding to 115 exchanges. Savings per year: December 2016 €6,623.30, year 2017 €20,289.55, 2018 €41,178.69, 2019 €102,485.06, 2020 €64,072.22, 2021 (until September) €196,134.46. The distribution of the total of drugs exchanged is in graphic.

Distribution of the total of drugs exchanged (both phases)



Conclusion and relevance

There are drugs with a high budgetary impact that are commonly used in a limited number of patients. Suspensions of this type of treatment can make the hospital having an immobilized stock without possibility of use. The establishment of a network of exchanges to share resources between various centers can be a saving strategy with significant economic impact, such as drugs that are not useful in one center can be used in another. **No conflict of interest.**