

MANAGEMENT OF DRUGS IN PATIENTS WITH SWALLOWING DIFFICULTIES IN A PUBLIC RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME: ROLE OF THE HOSPITAL PHARMACIST

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Background

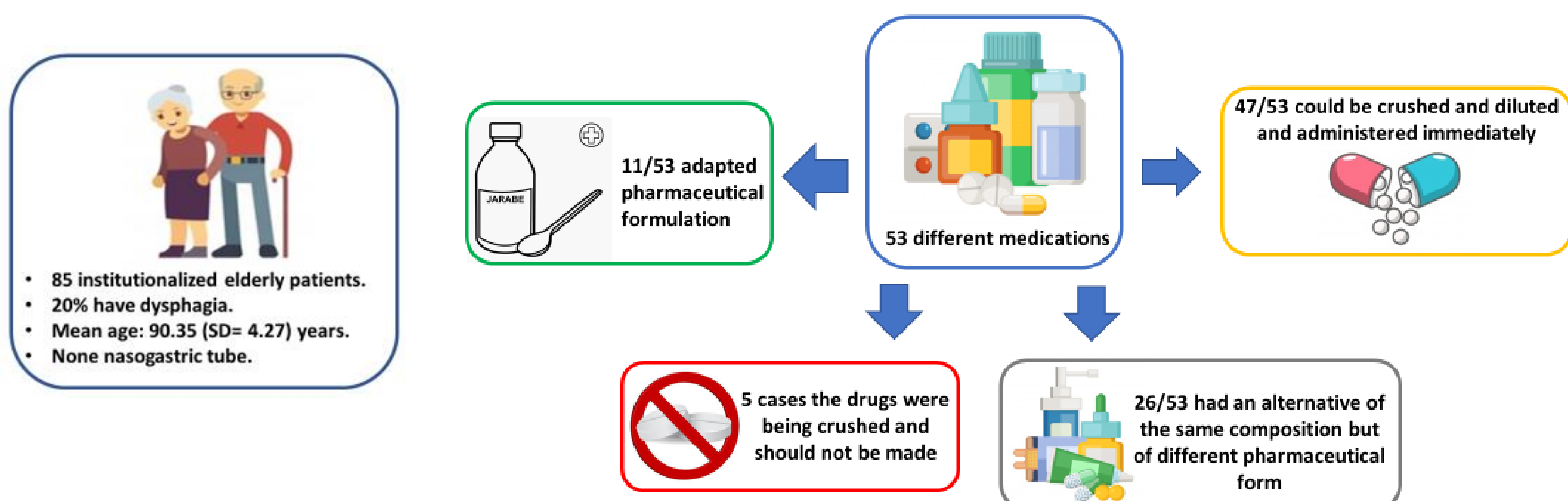
Institutionalized people in a nursing home have a profile characterized by advanced age, multiple pathologies and many of them also suffer from swallowing problems. This not only affects the nutrition, also including taking medications. Many of drugs must be crushed or dissolved to facilitate its administration and in many cases its stability is not known in these conditions.

Aim and objectives

The aim of this study is to evaluate medication administered to patients with swallowing problems in a public residential care home and establish possible commercialized alternatives or developing compounding pharmaceutical preparations.

Material and methods

A prospective longitudinal study was performed (1 month) in a public nursing home. Data collect were: patients with swallowing difficulties and oral treatments which they must subdivide or crush administration, nasogastric tube, age, sex, number of drugs and pharmaceutical forms. Also it includes literature search for drugs and use in this manner (small therapeutic windows, slow release, enteric coats, etc.), to look for alternatives that facilitate its administration and guarantee their stability and security.



Results

Fifty-three different medications were identified, only 11 of them had an adapted pharmaceutical formulation. The 50% (26/53) of them had an alternative of the same composition but of different pharmaceutical form commercialized as syrup, oral solution, drops or powder. In 47 cases the drugs could be crushed and diluted and administered immediately. In 5 cases the drugs were being crushed and should not be made. The pharmacist proposes other alternatives such as drinking parenteral ampoules when it could do (5/53), sublingual administration (1/53) or elaborate compounding preparations (8/53). The possibility of preparing 8 compounding pharmaceutical preparations were facilitated.

Conclusion and relevance

Most of the treatments that were analyzed did not facilitate swallowing and were manipulated, which can provoke medicine administration errors. Hospital pharmacists should assess the suitability of medication formulations compounding and propose solutions to guarantee the stability and the security of medicines.

