



How would physicians and nurses handle the problem of drug shortages?



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Introduction

Drug shortages, which can occur for many reasons including manufacturing and quality problems, delays, and discontinuations, have significant impact on patients and healthcare providers.

A **Drug Alteration List** due to drug shortages was implemented according to a standardised process after evaluation and discussion by managers of Vienna Health Association.

This list is updated on a daily basis and is accessible via Intranet of Kaiser-Franz-Josef Hospital, a 720 bed District General Hospital in Vienna, Austria.

Purpose

To deal with drug shortages in a timely manner a varied approach including the cooperation with healthcare professionals, healthcare providers and industry is necessary.

We aimed to discuss following questions:

- **HOW** are Health Care Professionals dealing with drug shortages?
- **WHAT** kind of measurements could reduce the risk of patients' medical care in case of drug shortages?
- **WHAT** are the suggestions and proposals towards the Pharmacy and the manufacturer to communicate these issues?

Methods / Data Collection

A standardised questionnaire was handed out to nurses and physicians of four medical and three surgical wards. The returned data collection forms were evaluated with quantitative and qualitative analyses methods.

Aims

- Recognition Level / Benefit of the daily Drug Alteration List
- Utilization / Knowledge of various services provided by the Pharmacy
- Requests / Proposals related to recurrent situations of certain drug shortages in the hospital.

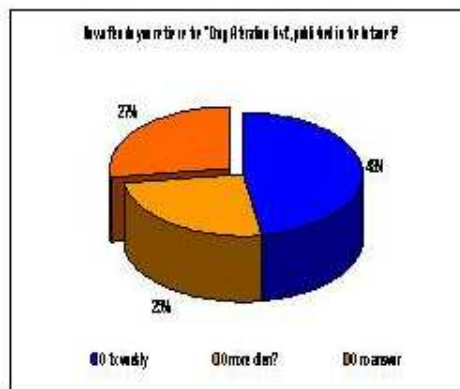


Figure 1

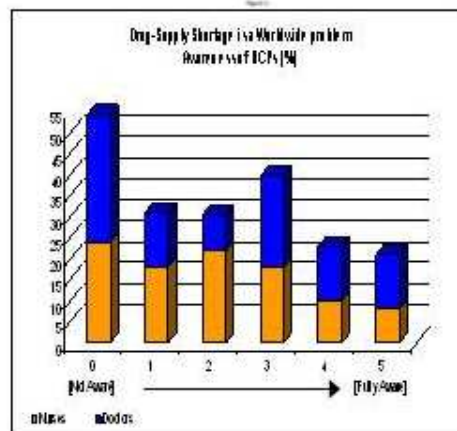


Figure 2

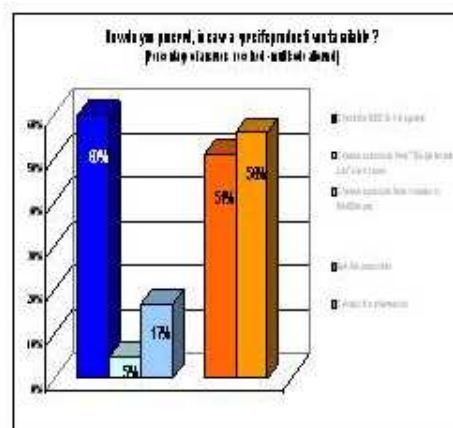


Figure 3

Results

74 of 120 (64%) data collection forms were returned. In total 23 physicians and 54 nurses responded.

Only 50% of healthcare professionals knew about the **Drug Alteration List** on the intranet platform. (Fig.1)

Half of the participants of the survey were aware of various drug shortages (rating scale 0 – 5; 0 = not aware, 5 = fully aware), being a worldwide problem. (Fig.2)

The following **ENDPOINTS** were identified:

- **Significant benefit** of the provided **pharmacy service** on the wards
- **Timely information** management by the Pharmacy about any supply issues
- Optimisation of **cooperation** with healthcare professionals of primary and secondary care (i.e. inter-ward, inter-hospital, community pharmacy, family practitioner, etc.) and industry.
- Direct cooperation with the **patient** and provision of **drug counselling**
- Pharmacists advice is inevitable for information in case of drug shortages (Fig.3)

Conclusion

The positive impact of clinical pharmacy service was mentioned by almost everyone.

Most of the ward staff is not fully aware of world wide drug shortages.

Creating awareness and providing professional support by the Pharmacy in case of drug shortages is an additional key element of our service.

Acknowledgements

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Disclosure

The author of this presentation has nothing to declare concerning possible financial or personal relationships with commercial entities that may have a direct or indirect interest in the subject matter of this presentation.