

ROLE OF THE PHARMACIST IN HOSPITAL: WHAT IS THE PERCEPTION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS?

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Background

The pharmacist has a central role in a hospital. However, in the absence of regulation (law) that defines the role and prerogatives of the hospital pharmacist in developing countries, the missions of the pharmacists are many, and perceptions of other health professionals on the role played by pharmacists in hospital are disparate.

Purpose

To determine the perception of health professionals about the role of the hospital pharmacist. Three questions were asked of health professionals: (1) What is the role of the pharmacist in the hospital? (2) Can we run a hospital without a pharmacist? (3) What is the perception of hospital pharmacists in relation to their missions?

Material and methods

A survey was conducted among different categories of health professionals (pharmacists, physicians, nurses and technicians in three hospitals). Tables 1-3 were presented to health professionals to assess their perceptions on the role of hospital pharmacists.

Results

120 responses were collected and analysed. The results are summarised in tables 1-3.

Table 1 Perception of health professionals on the role of the hospital pharmacist

Missions	%
Pharmaceutical products procurement	98
Therapeutic monitoring	18
Pharmaceutical preparation	56
Pharmacoeconomics	72
Risk management	58
Development of hospital	62

Table 2 Perception of the indispensability of the pharmacist in relation to the tasks defined

Missions	Yes	No
Pharmaceutical products procurement	X	X
Therapeutic monitoring	X	X
Pharmaceutical preparation	X	X
Pharmacoeconomics	X	X
Risk management	X	X
Development of hospital	X	X

Table 3 Perception of hospital pharmacists in relation to their missions

Missions	%
Pharmaceutical knowledge	<15
Work organisation	50 - 60
Adress book (pharmaceutical manufacturers) and strategic position (dispensing of pharmaceutical products)	40 - 50

Conclusion

Procurement is the most important function performed by pharmacists in hospitals in the eyes of health professionals. Therapeutic monitoring is the least. Other tasks of the hospital pharmacist that are perceived as important include application of pharmacoeconomics rules.

The pharmacist is seen by health professionals as an essential and non-essential professional for all missions selected. The regulatory prerogatives of hospital pharmacists should be more specific and clarified. The illegal practice of hospital pharmacy should be severely punished.

Key words : Hospital pharmacist, regulation, perceptions.

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