RECYCLING DRUGS FOR VIRAL DISEASES IN THE OUTPATIENT AREA

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Background

When drugs are multidose packaged, all units must be dispensed to the same patient. Sometimes, patients don't finish their treatment and return units left to the Pharmacy Department. Units returned must be discarded, so it is a loss to the Pharmacy Department.

Purpose

To evaluate how much do the Pharmacy Department lose when multidose packaged drugs for viral diseases are returned to the outpatient area.

Materials and Methods

A single-centre observational retrospective study was carried out in the outpatient area of the Pharmacy Service of the Hospital Clínico Universtiario de Valladolid during 10 months, between June 2011 and March 2012. The following information were collected in structured tables: name of medication, number of units returned, price to book value per unit and total value.

Results

7.764 units of drugs for viral diseases were returned during the study period. Of these units, a 90% were recovered by the Pharmacy Department to be dispensed to other patients. However, a 10% cannot be reused due to multidose packaging.

The return of drugs that can be reused is a gain in economic resources of 84,6% over the total value of returned drugs (€ 36.371).

Furthermore, the average cost per unit of reused drugs is € 4,4 vs. 7,3 € of non reused. The combos are usually multidose packaged, so it is in these drugs where the unitary repackaging would be more efficient.

Conclusions

•10% of the units of drugs for viral diseases returned in the outpatient area must be discarded due to multidose packaging.

•Unitary repackaging allows the Pharmacy Department to recover a 84.6% of the cost of returned drugs in this area.

•Combos, despite being more expensive than other drugs, are mostly multidose packaged, preventing reuse.

TCH-034