

# DRUG WASTAGE: A HIDDEN COST OF CANCER CARE

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## BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE



Our country's legislation **bans the return of dispensed drugs** to Pharmacy Services, potentially leading to **increased costs for the National Health System**.

✓ **To estimate the cost of pill wastage due to dose modifications and discontinuation for oral anticancer drugs.**

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

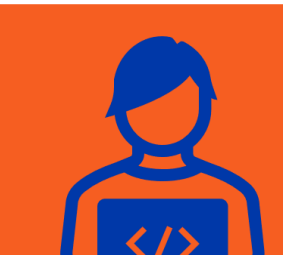
Retrospective economic evaluation.



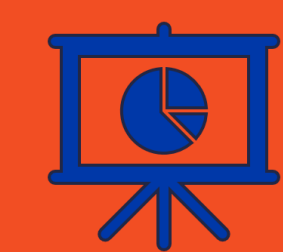
Intermediate complexity hospital.



Electronic medical records



Dispensations of oral anticancer drugs



July 2022 - July 2023



**Variables analysed** Drug, date of dispensing, tablets dispensed, date the patient needs to return, treatment interruption and cause, date of interruption and leftover tablets.



The laboratories' sales prices were used to calculate the costs.

Potential number of dispensations that the wastage could have covered:

• by dividing the total wastage by the median price per dispensation.

\*Dose modifications were not taken into account in drugs which had pill strengths divisible at each dose-reduction level.  
\*\*Unmarketed drugs in our country were excluded.

## RESULTS



1239 dispensations

enzalutamide 40 mg (25%)  
ribociclib 200 mg (18%)  
niraparib 100 mg (12%)  
lenvatinib 10 mg (5%)

Median nº of days for which medication was dispensed:  
30 days [IQI 28-35]

Median Price per dispensing:  
€3,173 [IQI 1.866-4.445]

Annual expenditure:  
€3,759,172

In 34 interruptions patients had tablets remaining

54%

Median wastage per patient  
€1,393 [IQI 645-2,503]

Total wastage  
€56,459

- 30.3% of discontinued treatments
- 1.5% of annual expenditure

63 dispensations were interrupted

5%

Median price per dispensing  
€3,173 [IQI 1.155-4,445]

total cost  
€186.327

disease progression  
52%

toxicity  
30%

17 dispensations (1.4%) could have been covered with the total cost of pill wastage.

## CONCLUSIONS

- ❑ Although few treatments were discontinued, significant economic wastage occurred due to drug prices.
- ❑ To minimize it, it has been suggested that companies refund money for unused tablets and manufacture appropriate pill strengths.
- ❑ Additionally, hospital pharmacists could be empowered to decide on the return of medications.

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