

# Supply disruptions of essential drugs. A reporting platform based on a public-private-partnership to prevent and overcome shortages in Switzerland

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## Abstract

Supply problems of essential drugs which cannot more be managed by the market players alone are internationally increasing. Therefore, additional measures are required to ensure the drug availability for patients. The new official reporting system introduced in Switzerland and the first experiences are presented. The obligation to report supply disruptions for authorized drugs to the national authority was introduced in Switzerland on 1 October 2015. The market authorization holders have to report supply problems on a newly established electronic platform operated by the Federal Office for National Economic Supply. The incoming notifications are analyzed by an interdisciplinary group of economy health care and pharma professionals from the private sector and authority people in the field who have signed a strict confidentiality agreement. This group advises on adequate measures to be taken to optimally manage the drug supply issues. Most of the 74 reports analyzed over the first fifteen months concerned parenteral hospital drugs such as cytotoxics (35 %), vaccines (25 %) and anti-infectives (12 %). The supply problems vary extensively for their duration. The most frequent measure utilized to overcome the problem was the release of existing compulsory stocks, enforced when necessary by a recommendation to prioritize the specific drug use for given indications or by quota settings to the hospitals accompanied by alternative treatment proposals. The mandatory notification of supply problems allows the preparation and introduction of adequate measures at an early stage. The continuous national monitoring of the concerned drug stocks helps to define the most appropriate time point to introduce these measures. The systematic review of causes and of most frequently involved products allows defining more accurately measures to better cope with future supply issues. The established partnership between the public and private sector is a key success factor for an improved management of drug supply problems.

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