

MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 HEALTH CRISIS: A SURVEY IN SWISS HOSPITAL PHARMACIES

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Abstract

Objective: This survey aims at reviewing the actions undertaken by Switzerland's hospital pharmacies during the first wave of COVID-19 pandemic.

Methods: A questionnaire covering topics related to the management of the COVID-19 crisis was sent to 65 heads of Swiss hospital pharmacy.

Results: 59% of pharmacies reported changes in the role of their staff. 41% of pharmacies had existing standard operating procedures or pandemic plans. 51% created new drug lists for: COVID-19-specific treatments (83% of pharmacies), sedatives (81%), anaesthetics (77%) and antibiotics (73%). Drug availability in COVID-19 wards was managed by increasing existing stocks (54% of pharmacies) and creating extra storage space (51%). Two drugs generated the most concern about shortages: propofol (49% of pharmacies) and midazolam (44%). Remdesivir stocks even ran out in 26% of pharmacies. 77% of pharmacies experienced problems procuring hand sanitiser solutions and 53% manufactured these themselves. Specific new documents were drafted to respond to medical needs with regards to drug administration (29% of pharmacies), drug preparation (29%) and treatment choices (24%). 47% of pharmacies implemented internal specific hygiene measures and 28% introduced team briefings.

Conclusions: Swiss hospital pharmacies encountered many challenges related to the COVID-19 crisis and had to find solutions quickly and effectively.

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