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Snap shot on some drug expenditures in Macedonia related to extremely low-price generics: How low can we go?

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Introduction: Supply of low cost generics is priority in every heath care system. In Macedonia, positive list of drugs (PLD) for primary and hospitals is covered by Health Insurance Fund (HIF). HIF reported increased drug expenditures for 2014 of 88% in utilization of prescriptions; PL drugs without copayment increased from 20% (2009) to 75% (2014). HIF has policy of lower prices, high quality drugs and decrease in co-payments. Setting of drugs' prices after registration is by Ministry of Health (MoH) defining the maximum price. HIF sets reference price payable to providers AT or BELOW the MoH's price. This snap shot describes dramatic decrease and some extremely low prices. We considered the question: how low can we go with the prices of generics?

Methodology: Selected generics from the PLD have history for prices decrease (2011-2015). Calculation of price decrease (per revision or yearly) and for the entire period was made. Comparison included the prices by MoH versus reference prices by HIF. Selected drugs were taken from the pool of most used drugs (according to the utilization of prescriptions in 2014) including some drugs with extremely low prices per package.

Results: Investigated period 2011-2015 where decrease occurred, showed variable decrease ranging from 16-76%. Very low prices of drugs as below as 1 euro per package were noted.

Discussion: According to this snap shot investigation, PLD should be revised in serious manner not the trivial one; defining the prices should be unified at a national level and prices should be more realistic. Conclusions: The politics of savings should be towards use of saved funds for inclusion of new drugs on the PLD. Setting the lowest price especially for old generics should be considered. Registration of many generics in terms of variety of choices of drugs on the market needs to be reconsidered.

Recent Publications

1. G Damjanovska, M Seistrajkova (2010) Introducing Reference pricing system (RPS) in Macedonia, initial domestic generic producer prospective. FIrst Croatian Congress on Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research with International Participation, Croatia
2. M Seistrajkova, G Damjanovska (2011) Pharmaceuticals' market in Macedonia – new challenges for old problems. Second Croatian and First Adriatic Congress on Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research with International Participation, Croatia
3. M.Seistrajkova, G. Damjanovska (2012) Pricing Policy in Macedonia – overview analysis. First Bosnian-Herzegovinian and Second Adriatic Congress on Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research with International Participation, Bosnia and Herzegovina
4. M Seistrajkova (2014) Clinical coding in Qatar – How far have we come? PCSI Conference, Qatar
5. M Seistrajkova, M Berlinguet (2014). Qatar SCH DRG analytics for planning and monitoring purposes. PCSI Conference, Qatar.

Biography

Marija Seistrajkova has her expertise in evaluation of drug policies and its implementation in public and private health systems. Her major passion is still related to medications, especially issues related to expensive drugs and old generics. Recent work was made in light of provision of health services and how pharmaceuticals policy can be incorporated and best used in different health care systems and by different service providers.

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