

Abstract

Generic drugs and generic substitution from the patient perspective I.

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Introduction: Generic substitution and generic drugs are important instruments of drug policy in many countries, which allow to reduce price of medicines, while maintaining their quality. Experience shows that a prerequisite for the rational use of both instruments is sufficient awareness among both health professionals and patients.

Objective: The aim of this study was to analyze the opinions, knowledge and experience of patients regarding generic drugs and generic substitution.

Methods: Data were collected between 1 March 2015 and 31 March 2015 in a workplace practitioner in Prague. It was an observational survey. We contacted all patients who visited a doctor during that period. Patients had to agree to their inclusion in the investigation and also meet "inclusion criteria" (e.g., at least 18 years old, literate in Czech, long-term use at least one medicine). The questionnaire included 28 questions (4 open and 24 closed), focusing on socio-demographic characteristics and knowledge, opinions, experiences and self-activity of the respondent regarding generic substitution and generic drugs. The questionnaire was piloted. The data obtained were analyzed and evaluated mainly using frequency analysis.

Results: In study were interviewed 261 patients and 142 of them met the inclusion criteria and agreed to complete the questionnaire. All of them were included in the research. Characteristics of respondents: women (49%), the average age of the respondents was 56.9 years (SD = ± 14.48). 23% had heard of generic drugs and generic substitution for the first time, a further 23% had information from a pharmacist, only 12% of physicians. On most legislative issues a significant proportion

of respondents were unable to answer. Over 60% of respondents did not ask for cheaper medicines. Pharmacist to respondents offered alternative more often if the prescribed product was not in stock.

Conclusion: Large proportion of respondents did not know about the possibility of generic substitution and was unaware of the essence. The ways leading to the increased of the rational use of generic medicines, respectively generic substitution could be the establishment of an information campaign aimed at patients and the greater involvement of health professionals (doctors and pharmacists).

Keywords: Generic substitution, generic products, opinions of patients, questionnaire survey.