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A Brazilian initiative for better drugs for children

Drug utilization in children is challenging because of the scarcity of scientific evidence as well as the inadequacy of products for this age group. A comparison between the Brazilian list of essential medicines and the WHO list of essential medicines for children (LEMc 2011) showed a satisfactory presence of the actives but an insufficiency of adequate drug formulations (dosage form and strength), mainly for neonates. These factors stimulated the creation in 2010 of an academic initiative to advocate for better drugs for children (BDFC) in Brazil, named MeMeCri (Melhores Medicamentos para Crianças), a research and action group bound to the Federal University of Ceara (UFC) and recognized by the National Research Council (CNPq). MeMeCri have expanded its activities, including researchers and professionals from other Brazilian universities, advocating for BDFC in scientific and professional events and asking the attention of the Brazilian Government to this issue. Pharmacoepidemiologic and pharmacovigilance research and development of pediatric formulations are in course and some are already published. New research projects involve pharmacovigilance in neonates, drug use in mental disease in children and youth, and metilfenidate prescription in public services and development of pediatric formulations for neglected diseases. MeMeCri performed two international symposiums about BDFC (2010 and 2015), inviting international and national experts. In October 2015, the Brazilian Minister of Health created a working group to elaborate suggestions about the problem of drugs for children nationwide, where MeMeCri was nominated for participation.

Biography

Helena Lutescia Luna Coelho is a Pharmacist, PhD in Pharmacology with Post-doctoral studies from Mario Negri Institute-Milan, Italy. She was a full Professor of the Federal University of Ceara (UFC) till 2012. She was a member of the WHO expert committee selecting the first list of essential medicines for children (LEMC 2007). Currently, she coordinates the research and action group at Melhores Medicamentos para Crianças (MeMeCri), and taken an initiative for better drugs for children in Brazil and working voluntarily as a Researcher at UFC.

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