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A retrospective study on the pharmacoeconomic impact of pharmacists' interventions in a tertiary hospital

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Background: Clinical pharmacy, a fast-emerging trend in healthcare, is concerned with promoting rational medication use by providing a variation of patient care that seeks to promote health, wellness and disease prevention. In the Philippines, the role of the clinical pharmacist is not fully recognized with only a handful of institutions that implement the use of this particular resource.

Objectives: This study aims to provide insight on the important role of pharmacists in medication safety by assessing the frequently occurring medication errors intercepted and identified by the pharmacists in a selected tertiary hospital and gauging the monetary equivalence of pharmacists' interventions.

Methods: The Medication Safety Through Interventions (MSTI) forms of the hospital were used to gather data on commonly occurring medication errors and the specific interventions done by pharmacists within the hospital. Qualified interventions were selected for the study for the estimation of cost savings and cost avoidance, using the formula developed by Nesbit *et al.* (1990).

Results: 1,068 pharmacy interventions have been reported from January to February 2016. These interventions were documented as errors of commission (23.03%), errors of omission (13.30%), and drug therapy monitoring (63.67%). 201 of the reported interventions have demonstrated a reduction in patients' overall drug therapy cost. Direct cost savings and cost avoidance of the interventions made by pharmacists amounted to 4,571,661.62 PHP (96,245.51 USD) and 75,004.37 PHP (1,579.04 USD), respectively. In total, cost saving and cost avoidance amounted to 4,646,665.98 PHP (97,824.55 USD).

Conclusion: The results indicate that medication errors have a direct impact on a patient's overall healthcare cost and that pharmacy interventions have had an overall positive pharmacoeconomic impact in the hospital setting.

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